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HOUSEHOLD NAMES.

BY HELLEN MARION BURNSIDE.

Ah, dearer still is the household name,
As the swift years onward flow,
Which sweetly once from the dear lips came
That grew silent long ago.
And now our faces are homeward set,
How dear to our longing ears,
Have grown those voices that call us yet
By the names of our youthful years!

All tossed apart is our kindred band,
Like boats on a stormy sea,
Though we all set sail for the self-same land
In whose heaven we long to be;
But spent and weary, we onward row
Our welcome sweet to claim,
For faintly still on each storm-worn prow,
Is written a household name.

Oh, mother, gone home so long ago,
You have pleaded for us in prayer,
Till our household names the angels know—
They are spoken so often there!
And there'll be great joy in Heaven one day,
When over the pale sea foam
All frail and shattered, and drenched with spray,
The last of your boats comes home.

A Thief in the Candle.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOUBLE CUNNING," "UNDER WILD SKIES," "ALONG THE LINE," "BENEATH THE SEA," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—(CONTINUED.)

"YOU talk of following the example of those men," she said with a smile. "What nonsense! You could not."

She bent down and kissed his forehead, and then returned to her work, while, with a weary sigh, he continued the experiment upon which he was engaged.

"I must have more acid," he said at last, peevishly. "Hannah, what money have you?"

She looked up with a piteous aspect.

"Only four shillings, dear."

"I must have two," he said, hastily. "I feel certain that I have the clue at last."

"We have only four shillings, Adam," said Mrs. Robson, appealingly.

"I know—I know," he cried, impatiently. "Do—do pray have a little faith in me and my struggles."

"Faith, dear!" sighed the unhappy wife; "have I not always had faith in you?"

"Yes, yes! but you seem to doubt me so at times. I tell you I am sure now. There, there! don't look at me like that. I know I have told you before that I am sure; but this time I am. Where is that boy?"

Mrs. Robson rose, and going to the door called him, and then, quietly producing the money required, placed it unmurmuringly in her husband's hand.

There was a gentle smile upon her face now, but all the while she was trying to think out how they were to manage for the bare necessities of life.

For years past that scheme of her husband's had been the Moloch he had worshipped; and wife, child, his own comfort and self-respect had been offered up in turn to the insatiate idol.

But, saving a quiet remonstrance now and then, she had not complained, but, with Grace, had suffered patiently.

If it had made Robson happy, she would not have cared; but he always left the pursuit which made his life desolate, and despairing, ready to creep back to the foot of the idol and sacrifice health—everything—again.

Jack bounced into the room with a black nose and a singed apron, looking like so much condensed animation or human yeast, ready to set the two saddened beings before him at work.

"What have you been doing, Jack?" said Robson, rather sternly.

"I didn't mean to harm, sir. You didn't want me here, so I—so I——"

"Well, what?"

"I was only melting down an old bit of lead in a spoon."

"What for?"

"To make a nicker, sir."

Jack's life had been so full of rebuffs—he had for so many years found out that he was always wrong, for no other reason than that he was a poor boy—that one shoulder was always on the hitch ready to protect his ears from the expected box, while his head and eyes were for ever suggestive of a London sparrow, always on the look out for danger and a way of escape. On this occasion, though, he grinned with satisfaction, for Robson said, gravely—

"I don't know what a nicker is, unless you mean a dump. But that's right, Jack; don't waste time. I like you to try and make things. It shows an inventive spirit. Take that bottle and go to Jerram's and get it filled."

Mrs. Robson sighed as she thought of the inventive spirit, and what a malignant spirit it had been in her home, but she said nothing, only went on working, her needle going click—click—click, slowly and steadily, as the boy closed the door behind him, and then there was silence, for Robson was listening intently.

"Why, that boy has not gone!" he cried, querulously; "and every moment is of such value to me now."

"Yes he has, dear!"

"But I did not hear him go down."

"No; he always slides down the bannisters."

"But I did not even hear the front door close."

"No; he always leaves it open."

"And so many valuables about here at times. Wife, I suspect that boy, sometimes of being the cause of all our troubles. There, there! don't say a word; I know you'll defend him. Perhaps he is quite honest, but who knows what influence may be brought upon him from outside?"

Mrs. Robson smiled and crossed over to him again.

"No, no," she said, softly; "you are wrong, dear. I'm afraid those diamonds were never stolen, and that it was all a piece of management on Devick's part to get a tight hold of you."

"Yes," he said, changing his ground directly, "I'm afraid so, and, wife, I dare not think about what he might do. I tell you, I dare not think about what a wicked, unscrupulous man, carried away by his evil passions, might do with regard to our darling."

"Nonsense, nonsense!" said Mrs. Robson, cheerily. "Why, Adam, this is 1840, and we are not living in the days of wicked barons with castles."

"No," he replied, "but men are the same now as they were then, and there are ways by which the rich can get the better of the poor. I tell you I shudder and dare not think about it. If anything happened to my darling, I should kill myself."

"Adam!"

"Yes," he cried, with a change coming over his quiet, nervous face till his eyes flashed, and he looked fierce as some wild creature about to be robbed of its young; "but I should first kill the villain who had done us the wrong."

"Oh, Adam!—husband! pray don't speak like that. I can bear poverty and disappointment if you give me your love, and you are patient; but to see you turn like this—it is too terrible. Gracie is very young, but the rough school in which she has been raised has made her a woman of the world. You need not fear her being tempted away."

"Perhaps not," he replied; "but there are other dangers beside temptation, and though I have fought back the dread for long enough, it comes back with increased power, and I know now what I would never allow myself to think before: Rice Devick is a cruel, unscrupulous villain, who would stop at nothing to gain his ends. I tell you if that child——"

"Hush! here she is," whispered Mrs. Robson, and Grace came into the room, heavy-eyed, and evidently full of trouble, which she drove away as she glanced at her father and mother.

"I've done now," she cried, cheerfully, "and come to help you, mother. What a lovely morning!"

She half ran across to where careworn Adam was seated upon his stool, in front of his bench of chemicals and tools, threw her soft arms about his neck, and kissed him on his eyes and brow.

"Come, sir," she cried, merrily, "my dress is growing so shabby, and you are not going on with your experiments. Let me see! I think I shall choose invisible green for my riding habit, and I have been thinking that I shall have a little black mare to ride in the Park—one of those glossy-skinned ones, father, and quite little, so that I shall not have so far to fall when I am beginning to ride."

"Ah, yes!" sighed Adam Robson, smiling sadly; "and what sort of a carriage for mother, eh?"

"Dark chariot, with a pair of bay horses, and very quiet liveries for the servants. Where shall you take a house, father?"

"Ah, yes!" he said again, smiling at the sweet face that bent over him. "Where shall we take a house—Belgrave Square?"

"No, no!" cried Gracie, seriously, "not in London. Just a little way out, where we can have a garden and flowers, and, oh! how nice it will be!"

"Do you feel, then, Gracie, that we must have a fine house, and carriages and horses to be happy—do you wish to have these?" said Mrs. Robson, with an uneasy look.

"No, no, no! of course not, mother," she cried, coming to her side, and beginning her work; "but father is going make his invention some day."

"Yes, some day," said Mrs. Robson, dreamily.

"Now, mother," cried Gracie, "that is too bad, and I will not have him damped like that. I am sure he will succeed."

"Yes, yes!" cried Robson, with feverish haste; "I shall—I know I shall. Heaven bless you child, for those words! They spur me to fresh efforts; and I shall—I will succeed!"

"Of course you will, father dear, and then we shall be so happy. No troubles shall come near us then. Everything shall be bright and cheerful, and you will never want for money, and I shall always be with you, and—and——"

Her face had gradually begun to twitch, and the tears to fall slowly upon her work; but she had made a brave fight to keep them back as she tried to picture out this happy future.

She had not the strength, though, that she believed and, letting her work fall in her lap, she covered her face with her hands and began to sob.

"Gracie, my darling," whispered Mrs. Robson drawing her chair to her side and taking her child in her arms, when the broken-hearted girl nestled to her, clinging to her and sobbing wildly.

"Don't—don't be angry with me!" she cried. "I did—try so hard—but it is—more than I can bear."

"Hush, hush, my darling! What is—What is—what is more than you can ever bear?"

"To—to see him so worn out with trouble; to see—to see you always trying so patiently; to be always poor; and—and——"

"To feel that poor little heart so sore, my darling," whispered Mrs. Robson in her child's ear. "There, there, there! all will come right yet; only be patient."

"Gracie, my darling," said Robson, coming to their side and bending over the pair, "you break my heart. I cannot work and see you like this. What—what can I do?"

Gracie started up to dash the tears from her eyes and force a smile upon her quivering lips.

"Scold me well," she said; "I deserve it. There! it's all over now. I am so foolish. Come, sir, go back to your bench and win the fortune you are going to make. Hush, mother! don't cry. Here comes Jack with the acid in his pocket."

As she spoke, the regular beat of the boy's feet could be heard in a sort of marching stamp as he came up whistling "The British Grenadiers," and rattling the balustrade in time to form the beating of imaginary drums.

"Here y'are, master," he said, "a good bottleful."

He closed the door by banging himself against it, and walked to the other side of the workbench, where he stood looking on, as, with trembling hands, and forgetful of all other troubles now, Robson seized the bottle of acid and began to pour some in the tube, while another small portion he poured into a little retort and placed over the spirit lamp, while his wife and child exchanged glances and a furtive kiss, and began working with all their might.

There was another stool on the other side of the rough bench, upon which Jack perched himself, watching everything with keenly inquisitive eyes, and whistling softly the while as he swung his legs to the tune.

"May I light a match, and start the lamp?"

"Yes, and be careful—very careful. Keep it a good way off at first."

"Yes, master, I 'member," said the boy, taking the spirit lamp and striking a match to light it. "You just waggles it about under the glass at first, to warm it up—so; and then you takes it away again—so; and then you puts it back and makes it 'otter, and takes it away, and then turn—oh, look at that!"

The boy had been suiting the action to the word, but with too much energy, and the result was that, in his impatience, he exposed the glass retort to too much heart, when there was a sharp sound, and the thin glass bulb was cut right across.

"Confound the boy!" cried the goldsmith, angrily. "If he would only keep his mischievous fingers off the bench!"

Jack shrank away, puckering up his brow, and rubbing his temples with his knuckles.

"I never see such a chap as I am," he said, in an ill-used tone. "I'm always doing something wrong. I didn't go for to do it, but it broke. Don't strap me master; but give's another chance."

"Another chance, you young dog! You'll ruin me in materials. Why can't you leave the things alone? Where are you going?"

"I don't know, master. Anywhere's. I ain't no good to nobody."

"Sit down on that stool, sir, and don't touch anything again."

"No, master."

"I get quite out of patience with you."

"Yes, master, you do."

"Then don't meddle. Try to learn how to be useful, and——"

"Don't scold him, father," said Gracie, coming up behind him. "It was quite an accident; Jack was being very careful. I

was watching him. I know he wants to be a good boy and help."

Jack's miserable face lit up with a broad smile as he looked up at Grace, and then Adam nodded and went on with his experiment.

For quite an hour there was comparative silence in the room, broken only by the clicking of the needles, and a low whisper or two exchanged between mother and daughter.

Now and then too, Jack would begin whistling softly some military quick step which he had picked up when following the band across the Park; but he always checked himself, and kept on watching the experiment his master essayed.

Then there would be the click of a glass stopper, the gurgle of a liquid poured out into a graduated measuring glass, and the soft musical sound of the fluid being stirred with a glass rod.

But as to leaving things alone, that seemed impossible to Jack, whose busy fingers meddled with everything within his reach, till suddenly he started back, oversetting his stool and falling with a crash, as Robson rose sharply from his seat, throwing down a glass rod in an angry manner as he cried—

"There's a curse upon it all; and this time I made so sure!"

"Oh, Adam!" cried Mrs. Robson.

"Yes. The two shillings you gave me, and that we wanted for bread, utterly wasted. I am a madman, a fool, and I ought to be put under restraint!" he cried, passionately, as he strode up and down the room, wringing his hands. "I shall keep you both in a state of starvation while I follow out my foolish ideas. Wife, wife, we are ruined! Let us go away from here."

He threw himself into a chair, and wife and daughter went and stood on either side of him, in patient sympathy, each taking one of his trembling hands and whispering a soothing word or two as they tried to calm him down.

His violence alarmed them, for there was a wildness in his eyes, and his breath seemed to come in jerks for a time; but by degrees his face began to soften, and a solemn stillness filled the room.

Meanwhile, Jack had got up, rubbing himself, and picked up his stool, which he softly replaced, and now, seeing the trouble going on, he stole on tiptoe to the window and caught and killed the flies within his reach.

This done, he looked out for something else to do, but nothing suggested itself, and there was no amusing sight to be seen from out of the window; so after a time, as if irresistibly attracted, he went back to the workbench, on the opposite side now, and began handling glass vessels and bottles and glass rods, after the fashion of his master.

Then, recalling the prohibition, he snatched hands away, and, to keep them out of mischief, he thrust them right into the bottoms of his pockets, to amuse themselves with some buttons, his new leaden sinker, and some scraps of lead.

Then out they came in the stillness. Nobody was heeding him, and those chemical glasses were so wonderfully tempting.

He began meddling again.

He snatched his hands back and thrust them into his pockets, but they would not stay there.

It was as if they were a pair of mischievous imps that would meddle, and before long he was busy again, forgetting everything in the thought that he was performing some great experiment, just as his master did; and, emptying some crystals into a glass cup, he poured in a little water from a bottle and placed it over the spirit lamp to boil.

Then he stirred it with a glass rod till the crystals melted, and a light steam began to rise from the infusion, and with a smile of triumph the young monkey looked about him, considering what he should do next.

There was a stoppered bottle near him, and he took up that.

The graduated glass was close by, and he took up that, removed the stopper, and poured out a portion, holding the glass up to the light so as to get an exact quantity.

Then, with a sigh of satisfaction, all still being quiet, he replaced the stopper and bottle, and bending over the glass vessel with its heated contents prepared to pour it in.

The result might have been one kind of dangerous explosion, with the boy's face burned and his eyesight destroyed; but instead of a chemical it was a verbal explosion that made the boy start up, as Adam rose and rushed at him.

"Don't—don't, master!" he cried shrinking back. "If you hit me I shall be obliged to run away."

"You young——" began Robson, darting to the bench; and there he stood as if paralyzed.

"Adam, dear, don't beat him!" cried Mrs. Robson.

"Jack, quick!" cried Gracie, catching the boy's arm to hurry him from the room, but like her mother, to stop wonder-stricken, as they saw the goldsmith throw himself upon his knees with his hands outstretched to heaven as with a wild cry, he then exclaimed—

"Thank Heaven! Thank Heaven!"

"Husband!"

"Father!"

"Oh, don't, master! I'll never do so no more!"

"Boy! boy!" roared Robson, rushing at him excitedly.

"Don't! Pray don't, master!" cried Jack as Gracie tried to screen him.

"Silence!" cried Robson, regardless of the fact that many steps were ascending the stairs. "Boy what I have toiled years to discover you have found out by accident. At last! My God! I thank Thee I am a rich man!"

"Gracie, he is mad," groaned Mrs. Robson.

"Mad? Yes, with joy!", he cried. "Look what the boy has done! The gold is precipitated at the bottom in fine powder. Wife! no more slavery! Gracie, freedom and hope and love! Jack, my boy, you have made me——Who are you?"

This to a couple of stern-looking, shabby men who had entered the room, one of whom stopped by the door, while the other, paper in hand, advanced and clapped the goldsmith on the shoulder.

"Mr. Adam Robson—suit of Rice Devick. Three hundred and fifteen pounds, thirteen and fourpence. I arrest you for debt!"

CHAPTER VII.

A TEMPORARY DIFFICULTY.

HAD a thunderbold fallen in Adam Robson's room, it could not have produced a more bewildering effect, and for a few moments the goldsmith stood speechless.

The silence was broken by the sheriff's officer.

"Going to pay?" he said, gruffly.

"Yes," cried Robson; "I can pay now I am——"

He was about to say "a rich man," but he checked himself as he gazed at the little glass vessel, now beginning to bubble furiously; the liquid it contained being in a violent state of ebullition for a few moments; then, as he gazed, a portion boiled over the side and extinguished the spirit-lamp with a sharp little explosion, the frail glass vessel flying all to pieces, and the successful experiment, with the fortune that was to rise out of the tiny dust of precipitated gold, seemed to those in the room as baseless as the steam that was rapidly absorbed.

"All right, sir—glad of it! Pay up then. Bill and costs—three—fifteen—thirteen—four. Can't take cheque."

"Yes, I can pay you," said Robson, upon whose brow the perspiration stood, "but not now."

"All right! Come on, then."

"No, no! I can find some one to advance the money directly!" cried Robson.

"Right, sir! let him advance it when you get there."

"There, man! Where?"

"Cursitor Street, sir—Solomon's. You'll be there a bit, and can settle the business there. If not—you know."

"I know?" cried Robson, with the flush of excitement dying out, and leaving him very pale. "What do you mean?"

"Whitecross Street Prison, sir. Oh! don't you mind, mum—ladies both. He'll be very comf'table there. Good company—plenty of gentlemen."

"To prison?" sobbed Grace, in agony.

"Lor! yes, miss! but it's only debtors' prison. 'Tain't as if he'd done any harm."

"Oh! father—father!" cried Grace. "What should we do without you?"

Adam Robson turned towards his child with a terrible sense of dread running through him.

He had felt the horror and misery of his position—being dragged away just in the moment of triumph; but all this was as nothing to the thought that he was about to be imprisoned—completely shut away from those he loved by the machinations of the man who now stood plainly forth as his greatest enemy.

He was a man whom he knew now to be perfectly unscrupulous. He had been rejected, and this was the first stroke directed against him—a stroke that rendered him helpless, while his child was almost alone and unprotected. What would be the next stroke that would fall?

His musings were interrupted by the sheriff's officer.

"Hadn't you better just chuck a few things in a carpet bag, sir? May be useful," he said.

"Stop! Let me think!" cried Robson.

"No, sir; you take my advice—don't you think till you're quietly settled down in the coffee-room in Cursitor Street. Then you can send for your s'licitor, and settle things with him."

"Oh, Adam!—husband!" cried Mrs. Robson, clinging to his arm.

"Why, Lor' bless your 'art, mum," said the sheriff's officer, "don't you take on like that. What is it? Just an arrest for debt. Why, we've gents as we visits art a dozen times a year, and they quite likes it now, don't they, Shadrach?"

"Like it? Course they do. Wouldn't be happy if we didn't go."

"But, Adam; it is so dreadful," sobbed Mrs. Robson.

"Don't—don't unman me now," he said, quickly. "Stop! let me think what to do next. We need not mind. This is only a temporary trouble. An hour ago it would have seemed like ruin; now," he cried, triumphantly, "it is only a trifling stone in my path!"

"Pray don't put your faith in those chemicals, Adam," whispered his wife.

"Not put my faith in them? Well, we shall see—we shall see."

"Sorry to trouble you, Mr. Adam Robson, but we've got another bird to ketch today, and the sal's waiting ready to put on his tail; so if it isn't pay on the nail, we've got to take you on at once."

"One minute," said Robson, rousing himself and turning to his wife. "Everything now depends on you," he whispered. "I leave Gracie in your charge.——Jack!"

"Yes, master."

"Keep always with Miss Grace. I trust to you to be man enough to help protect her."

"All right, master. I'm going to take care of her, you may be sure."

"Grace, my child, you and your mother must work together for your mutual help," whispered Robson. "Don't mind for me. I am certain now that our poverty is a thing of the past."

Grace held his hand between hers, looking very pale, but calm and firm.

"Let me see," said Robson thoughtfully. "Yes, that will be best. Wife, send Jack on to Dr. Brand directly, with a note, telling him what has happened, and asking him to come on and see me. What is the number in Cursitor Street, officer?"

"Forty-nine and a half, sir. Brass plate on the door—Solomon's. Better have a s'licitor, sir, and not a doctor, if you'll take my advice—eh, Shaddy?"

"Oh! I'd know," said the other. "It's the gent's fust time o'harsking, and it's upset his nerves a bit. Strong glass o' bran' water do as well as a doctor."

"You understand?" said Robson, hastily. "Send to him at once."

Grace winced and her brow grew troubled; but she said no word, and, in obedience to her father's wishes, she and Mrs. Robson hastily prepared a few necessaries for the arrested man.

Robson stood with his brows knit, trying to collect himself, as he found his brain in a whirl: the suddenness of the shock of his arrest just at the moment of his triumph being absolutely bewildering.

The two officers of the law were looking at him in a cool, contemptuous way; but he paid no need to them in his excitement, for at this sudden call in so important a moment in his life, as it seemed to him to be, there were a hundred things to say—a hundred instructions to give to those he left behind.

At last he declared himself ready, and, assuming a lofty carriage that he could not remain, he was about to bid wife and child a dignified farewell when a horrible dread of another kind attacked him.

Suppose the boy should begin talking about the discovery to some one who would have the patience and ingenuity to take it up!

He felt that he could not go like that, and he glanced at his bench.

No: without the key of knowledge he possessed, it would be impossible for even a clever chemist to reopen the experiment. Everything had been destroyed.

But there was the knowledge the boy possessed, and he might impart it, for he was sharp and clever in the extreme.

"Ready, sir, at last?" said the leader of the two men.

"One moment more!" cried Robson. "Here, Jack!"

"Well, I'm blest!" ejaculated the principal man. "If they was all like this I should resign."

The boy met his master, and suffered himself to be led into the corner of the room.

"You will not talk about my experiments Jack, and the way in which you mixed those acids?"

"'Tain't likely, sir."

"Nor—nor even show anyone how to do them?"

"No," said the boy, shaking his head violently.

"You could do that—over again," said Robson, "eh?"

"Dunno, sir. Dessay I could if I only tried."

"Ye—es, exactly," said Robson, looking at him dubiously. "What should you put in the glass receiver first?"

"I dunno."

"How much of the—of the contents of the large bottle would you pour in?"

"I dunno, sir. Shall I go on and try again?"

"No, no! certainly not!" cried Robson, hastily. "I forbid you to touch my apparatus until I return! I shall not be gone long."

The principal officer turned softly round to his subordinate and winked at him meaningly.

"Now, sir, are we to stop here all night?" said the former.

"No, no, my good man. One moment!" cried Robson, excitedly. Then turning to his wife again, "You will send for Brand?"

"Yes, dear, yes," she replied, trying to be firm; "but, Adam, would it be so degrading after what we have said to be Mr. Brand—to go to Mr. Devick for help."

"I do not ask his help," said Robson, indignantly. "I am no longer poor."

"No, no, of course not," said Mrs. Robson, to humor him in what she looked upon as a vain dream of success; "but would it not better if I went to Mr. Devick and begged to give us time?"

Robson caught her by the arm with a fierce grip.

"No," he whispered, fiercely; "for Heaven's sake, no! Not one word to him! Not one step to make us more his slaves! You hear me! I forbid you! I would sooner rot in prison than you should take one step! I would sooner kill her where she stands!"

"Adam!"

"Hush! not another word, or you will unman me before these people, and I want to go away calm, and treating the matter as a trifle. And that's what it is!" he cried—"a mere trifle. I daresay I shall be out tomorrow."

He looked at the sheriff's officer as he said this last aloud, and man took it up.

"Of course you may, sir. I should say yes, very likely indeed—eh, Shaddy?"

"Sartin, I should say, mate. It's hardly worth while for the gentleman to go, but I s'pose he must."

"Yes, Shaddy; forms o' law, you see. Ready, sir? That's right. Carry the gent's bag down, Shaddy, and shove it in the cab.

"Go on, old 'un; we shall have time to put salt on t'other chap's tail after all. My service to you, ma'am, and the young lady. Ta! ta! shaver; you're head man clerk o' the works now."

"Gracie, my child, is all this true?" groaned Mrs. Robson, as the door closed.

"Yes, mother, and we must not be weak women now we are left to fight the battle alone. We must be strong."

"But that plan of his!" exclaimed the suffering woman, with a despondent look at the wreck of the experiment upon the bench; "do you think—is it possible that it can be true?"

Grace Robson glanced at the bench where she had seen her father toiling for years, building up chemical castles which had all vanished into thin air.

"You don't answer me, Grace," said Mrs. Robson, impatiently.

"What can I say?" replied the girl, with a sigh. "Even if it were a fact at last, we dare not trust to it; and oh, mother, dear mother, must we go to Mr. Brand for any help?"

"It was your father's last command, my child," said Mrs. Robson, hoarsely, as Grace burst into a passionate flood of tears; and as she sobbed, incoherent words fell in whispers from her lips about 'degradation,' 'shame,' and 'sorrow.'

But there was a humorous side to the truble in Adam Robson's humble home, for, as the door closed, Jack had rolled up his sleeves tightly, and begun to spar and hit out at the panels, dodging and ducking his head to avoid imaginary blows, and ended by rushing across to the window, throwing it up, and shouting out, as the rattle of the cab wheels was heard, the most defiant ejaculation in boydom—

"Yah!"

CHAPTER VIII.

DEALING IN BULLION.

RICE DEVICK was down upon his knees in his handsome library, with the shaded lamp by his side, along with a small basin that seemed to contain some chemical mixture, and a sponge.

For a time he was busy rubbing and sponging the carpet in one particular place, with his sleeves turned up, and a fine dew standing upon his white forehead, which glistened every time he bent lower, and brought it in the full glow of the shaded lamp.

He worked hard at his task till there was a good-sized patch showing quite dark in the carpet, when he paused.

"Curse it! how it sticks!" he muttered. "If I use the stuff stronger, I shall take out the color."

He rose, placed the lamp upon the table, and the basin on a chair, after which he rolled up the carpet till the moistened spot was exposed on the reverse side, and beneath it the boarded floor was slightly discolored, and looked as if it had been scraped lately, and sand-papered.

To each of these places he devoted himself laboriously for a good hour, and then, having rubbed the patches well with a dry cloth, he slowly and thoughtfully burned that material and turned the carpet back.

"I shall have to put down a fresh carpet and burn this," he said to himself. "I shall never get this place clean; and if I do—if there were an inquisition made—some fellow with a microscope would find out tiny spots, and swear they were blood. What idiocy it is! What idiots they must have been who made the laws. Why, if I shot or poisoned some faithful dog which had served me well, fought against my enemies saved my life, protected my prosperity from thieves—well, I should have destroyed a splendid dog that was my own property—my dog—it was mine, and I held the power over it of life and death."

He stood looking down at the spot upon the carpet, and as he did so he took a paper-knife off the table and held it daggerwise in his right hand, while with his left thumb and finger he felt the edge and point.

"But if," he continued to himself "I am attacked by a useless, drunken scoundrel who would take my last shilling from me to waste in debauchery, and to get that money would betray every secret I possess, and grin as he saw me sent to penal servitude for life—I say, if I am attacked by such a ruffian as this, and, in defending myself, in protecting my property, I accidentally kill him, the law would try me and hang me without compunction, and the papers would call me a murderer.

"Well," he went on, "the law is foolishness; and as to me, I would rather have killed the useless scoundrel than the dog. Conscience? Fear! Pooh! I have only one fear—of being found out; and they would be clever who got the better of me there."

He threw the water a little at a time, beneath the grate, till the last drop was soaked up by the ashes; and, having burned the sponge, he replaced the basin in a cupboard beneath the bookshelves before throwing himself into a chair, to cool down and think out his plans, which had been interrupted by the incident of the visit of his old accomplice and the police.

"Time they were here," he said at last, as he glanced at his watch. "Humph! wants ten minutes."

Before five minutes were passed there was a faint whirring noise heard, as of a clock running down; and rising and crossing the room, he drew aside the curtain and replaced it.

Then opening the door, he passed along the passage, descended into what had once been the underground kitchen, and opened the area door to admit a couple of men, who after the door had been closed and securely fastened, followed him in silence to the library, where they remained standing, while Devick took his place behind the table.

One of the men was the heavy-faced fellow who had called on Robson to ask after Devick; but he was perfectly sober now. The other was a short, slight-looking, but evidently strong and active man, of a common Whitechapel type of countenance, disfigured by one peculiar eye that had the chameleon-like power of turning in all directions independently of the other, which was fixed upon Devick, while the peculiar orb was searching examining the room.

The probability is that when so employed it conveyed no impressions to its owner; but it wore the aspect of being on the look out for danger, all the same.

"Well," said Devick, sharply—"business."

"Right, guv'nor—business," said the lesser man, bringing both eyes to bear on Devick for a moment. "Barny Gedge and I did a neat little bit o' business out at Sydenham last——"

"That will do," said Devick, sternly. "Once for all, William Rixon, if you wish to do trade with me, keep your business to yourself."

"All right, guv'nor," said the man, in an ill-used tone. "I thought we was all pals."

"What!" cried Devick, fiercely. "Here, you Gedge, when you go away from here, let this man know his place."

The bigger man uttered a grunt, and, turning to his companion, gave him a thrust with his elbow, and whispered—

"Hold your row."

"Now," said Devick, "I have no time to waste, my lads. I don't want to quarrel with you, but I wish you both to understand that I am a wholesale dealer in bullion and precious stones, and the representative of a large house at Amsterdam."

"All right, sir," said Gedge; "let it be business, then. Friend of ours is in difficulties, and wants to dispose of his family plate. Bill Rixon here says, 'Why don't you go to your uncle's and pawn it?' Didn't you, Bill?"

"To be sure I did," said the other; "went down on my knees to him and begged of him to pawn it. 'Then,' I says, 'you can get it out again.' But he wouldn't—would he, Barny?"

"Not he. Obstinate as a mule. Said he was ashamed, and begged of us to sell it for him at the most it was worth."

"Where is it?" said Devick, with a contemptuous laugh; and he sat watching, as the two men brought out from various pockets some dozens of old-fashioned silver forks and spoons, all bearing the same crest.

The plate was handled carefully, so as not to clink together, and as it was laid upon the table Devick's white fingers were busy fitting spoon into spoon, fork into fork, so that they occupied quite a small space at last, though there were evidently several hundred ounces.

As soon as he had all before him, Devick took out a knot of red tape and a pair of scissors, neatly tied the plate together in dozens, and ended by opening a drawer and taking out a pair of copper scales and some weights.

The scales chinked and glistened under the lamp, and the two men looked on with eager eyes at the thin, well-kept white hands, which took one scale out of the other disentangled the silk cords that were attached, and then, rather ostentatiously, to demonstrate the fairness of the dealing, held the scales poised, to show that they were not a grain unequal.

This done, the scales chinked as he took up a pencil and half-sheet of paper and thrust them to Gedge.

"Keep account while I weigh," he said, quietly; and then for a few minutes he was deftly at work, weighing and giving the amounts, "Twenty-three—twenty-four and a half—thirty-two and a half—twenty-nine."

And so on, taking the plate from one side of the table to weigh, and placing it on the other as soon as it was done, while Gedge made a neat column of figures on the paper.

"That's all," said Devick. "Cast up."

Gedge busied himself, and set down the total, after which he handed the paper to his companion.

"No," growled the latter, "I sha'n't reckon it. If you says it's right I'm satisfied. Give it to the guv'nor."

Devick took the paper, ran up the column of figures, and said, aloud—

"Four hundred and eighty-three ounces, and a half, man. You are cheating yourselves."

"Oh! never mind about the half, guv'nor," said the lesser man. "We ain't particklar to a shade."

"But I am," said Devick very quietly. "Fair play in dealing is best in the long run."

"All right, then. What do you make it?"

"Twenty-four pounds three shillings and six-pence," said Devick, coolly.

"What!" cried Rixon. "Why, that's only a shilling an ounce! Old Moss would give two."

"Why don't you take it to him, then?" said Devick, "instead of coming here and wasting my valuable time."

"Oh! we thought we'd give you a turn, Mr. Devick, that's all."

"Very kind of you, I'm sure," sneered Devick.

"We didn't think you'd serve us like this did we, mate? That lot's worth fifty pun, and we thought we would give you a turn."

"Look here," said Devick, "no fooling. I'm a man of business. You didn't think you would patronise me and give me a turn; and you did not go to Old Moss, because you know what has happened sometimes when there have been nasty inquiries."

"Oh! but we thought two shillings an ounce was——"

"Hold your tongue, sir! I say you did not go to Old Moss because you were afraid, for one thing; and, for another, you knew he would cheat you with false weights, knock off so much for discount, and then only pay you a little money at a time, and keep you waiting weeks for it. I don't trade with men I know like that. You sell me that bullion, and in an hour after you have gone it will be melted down and cast in little ingots; while, when you go, no matter what you have brought me, and I have agreed to give, you take with you your money in sovereigns—clean new money—and no discount."

"Guv'nor's right, Bill," growled Gedge. "There's no humbug over it. Take it, and let's go."

"All right," said Rixon; "but you'll make a good thing outer that, Mr. Devick."

"Perhaps," was the reply, and he counted out the money to the men, and then placed the silver in a drawer. "Perhaps I shall make a good thing out of it; perhaps I shall not. At all events, you two have so much hard cash to play with. Now, do you want to earn more?"

"Want to earn more?" said Gedge, sharply; "of course we do. What is it—plate?"

"No, not this time."

"Jewels, then," said Rixon, with a roll of his peculiar eye.

"Yes," said Devick to himself, with a peculiar look; "a pearl."

Then aloud—

"It is not a risky job this time, my lads. Gedge, you know Adam Robson's?"

"Oh, yes, I know it," said Gedge very surlily.

"You can go there to-morrow with a message to Mrs. Robson that Robson wishes to see her at the prison."

"At the prison?" said Gedge, starting.

"Yes, at the prison; and as soon as she has left the house Rixon must go in and fetch out that boy they have there. "Yes, that will do. Doctor Brand wants him immediately. Do you hear?"

"Oh, yes, I hear."

"The moment the boy has gone you will come and warn me."

"Yes; and then?"

"That is all," said Devick, quietly. "Then my part of the business begins. Say at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning, punctually, you will go, Gedge. You, Rixon, will be waiting. The message will fetch the woman at once. As for the boy, you will be easy with him at first, but if he makes any objections, you will bully and frighten him—no, that will not do. Say that he is to go to Doctor Brand's to fetch some money to set his master free. Do you understand—both of you?"

"Oh, yes, we understand," said Gedge, again surlily.

"Then I depend upon you. At eleven to-morrow, mind; and five pounds apiece if you do your work well, and it succeeds. Now go: I want to be alone."

He rose from his seat and opened the door leading the men downstairs, and seeing them out in the darkness by the area.

A minute later they were going down the street together.

"Nice to be under his thumb, Barny, ain't it?" said Rixon. "I always feel better when I'm safe outside. Shouldn't like to offend him—should you?"

"Yes and no," said Gedge, roughly. "See his game?"

"Not quite. Do you?"

"Yes," said Gedge, with an oath. "Yes; curse him! He's a bad one, if a bad one ever lived. Good-night, lad; I've got a job now that I must do."

"What, won't you come and have a drink?"

"Drink? Yes, of course. No; not now—not now. Don't ask me, mate, or I shall never do what I want."

* * * * *

As the two men went down the street together, Rice Devick secured the door of his room, and five minutes later he was standing in a small laboratory in front of a brick furnace, in which glowed a charcoal fire, with a broad chimney above it to carry off all fumes, and in the glowing charcoal a large crucible was turning white in the fierce flame.

Into this crucible, by turns, Devick thrust forks and spoons and little crystals of some chemical, probably nitre, whose effect was to increase the intense heat and act as a flux to the metal, which ran down so rapidly into a fluid state that, as Devick bent over the furnace, whose fierce glow lit up his handsome, evil face, it almost seemed as if he were taking spoon after spoon in a pair of small tongs, and stirring with them the preparation in the clay vessel in the fire.

He was smiling as he did so, for the spoons with which he stirred the glowing silver rapidly melted down and disappeared; but he was not thinking of the task he had in hand, for, in place of the glistening fluid increasing in the melting-pot, he seemed to be seeing the fair young face of Grace Robson.

"Perhaps she will not be so hard to deal with when alone," he said, with a half laugh. "Well, we shall see."

CHAPTER IX.

A TRAP TO CATCH A MOUSE.

HALF-PAST nine, and Rice Devick was seated at his breakfast on the first floor, face to face with the woman who claimed to be his wife.

He had the newspaper before him, and appeared to be reading it; but his companion knew from experience that he was not reading a line, but was working out some plan; and this put her on the qui vive.

She was passing him a freshly-filled cup of coffee, when there was a resonant thump on the front door, and the woman rose and left the room.

"Yes," said Devick, rustling the paper as he turned it, going through the motions of an attentive reader; "they will not dare to break faith. It is all certain enough."

"A boy wants to see you," said his companion, re-entering the room.

"Boy? What boy?"

"From Adam Robson's."

Devick's eyes seemed to open a little more widely, and then half closed, as if he felt that he was being observed; and, rising slowly, he walked out of the and downstairs in his slippers, paper in hand.

"Does he think me a child?" cried the woman, with a flash of her eyes. "Well, he is playing a dangerous game, and mine shall be as risky but what I will win."

Meanwhile, Devick went down into the dim hall, where the boy was waiting, ready to jump off the chair on which he was seated and make a scraping kind of bow.

"Well, my lad, what is it?" said Devick.

"Please, sir, could I speak to you a minute, sir? Wouldn't keep you long, sir. It's werry particklar."

Devick raised his eyebrows and smiled, for his quick sense of hearing detected the opening of the door above; and, without a word, he opened the library door and signed to the boy to go in, closing the double doors behind them, and leaving the boy standing, as he went to his seat behind the table.

"Let me see, I should know you," he said, with a smile.

"Yes, sir, you know me, sir, often seen me", said the boy, ducking his head and grinning.

"Of course. I did not recognize you at first, Robson's Jack."

"Yes, sir. I'm Jack, sir—John Doe, sir."

"Well, Jack, and so you've brought a message for me, I suppose? Where is it?"

"No, sir; no message sir," said the boy, hesitating. "You see, sir——"

"Yes, my lad, don't be afraid. Go on."

"Yes, sir. You see——"

"Well, go on. What are you afraid of?" said Devick, watching the boy searchingly.

"I ain't afraid, sir; but you see—you see, I don't quite like to ask you."

"What do you want to ask me, my boy?" said Devick, quietly. "Whether I want a lad?"

"Oh, no, sir; it wasn't that!"

"Well, then, what was it? Did Mrs. Robson send you?"

"No, sir."

"Your master?"

"No, sir. Master's in prison, sir, you know."

"To be sure, yes; I had forgotten. Who sent, then—Miss Grace?"

"No, sir," said the boy, drawing himself up, and giving his head a shake; "nobody sent me, sir; I come all of my self."

A impatient look crossed Devick's countenance; but he felt that there was something coming, and, smiling at the boy, he gave him an encouraging nod that won his confidence, and he burst out—

"You see, sir, missus and Miss Grace thinks it's werry cruel o' you to put poor master in prison just at the time when he's going to make his fortun' and be a rich man."

"And is he going to make his fortune and be a rich man, Jack?"

"Yes, sir. He's just found out how, and was going to make it day 'fore yesterday, when the two Old Baileys come and took him off to quod."

"Well, Jack?"

"Well, sir, missus and Miss Grace wouldn't come and ast you to let him off, so I says to myself, I says, if the gentleman knew as master was going to make lots o' money now, and pay him, he'd let him out o' prison direckly; and so I says to myself last night, I says, as I lay abed, if they won't go and ast the gentleman, I will."

[TO BE CONTINUED]

A CURE FOR SUICIDE.—Everybody who reads Dickens remembers Mantilini's suicidal mania, and most people are aware that Mantilinis are common among married people. But the mania is not confined to gentlemen; we heard a story the other day of a Frenchman and his jealous spouse at one of the West-end hotels. The lady indulged herself continually, as soon as closeted with her mispronouncing husband, in hysterical upbraiding for his imaginary dolinquencies in ogling the ladies at table, and at last things grew so bad that the following *denouement* transpired. The lady led off, as usual, with much emphasis.

Monsieur, however, had reached the culminating point of human endurance, and he retorted in a vehement roulade of broken English, interlarded with French expletives, until the fair one closed his case of razors in an apparently desperate determination to commit suicide.

Seizing her arm with one hand, he pulled the bell-rope violently with the other, a summons which was speedily answered, for the waiters, whose organs of inquisitiveness are usually well developed, had been listening outside of the door to what was going on within. As soon, however, as one entered the chamber, our gallant Frenchman relinquished his hold of the lady's arm.

"Ah, ah! madame," hissed he, between his teeth, "you shall cut your throat, eh? Tres bien, very good; now you cut your throat so quick as you like. Mais I has von leetle witness as you cut him yourself. Ah, ah! ma chere! if you want cut your throat, cut him right way."

It is scarcely necessary to remark that the lady declined the offer, and that monsieur heard no more of her suicidal intentions.

Bric-a-Brac.

WOLVES.—About the best wolf story going is one told by a western paper. It gives the particulars of a lame wolf that lay in the rabbit path with its mouth open, while the rabbits, several thousand in number, ran down its throat until the wolf burst.

A SHORT ESSAY.—At the close of the American war with Mexico a prize was offered by an institute in one of the rising settlements in the Far West for an essay on the war. The successful essayist certainly deserves praise for the brevity of his production, which was as follows—"Chapter I. Cause of the war: Texas. Chapter II. Result of the war: Taxes."

TEARS.—The utility of tears to animals is general, and particularly to those which are exposed much to the dust, such as birds which live amid the wind, is easy to understand. The eye would soon be dirtied and blocked up had not nature provided this friendly ever-flowing to wash and refresh it. A very little fluid is necessary to keep the eye always clear and clean.

FORTY ONLY.—In Bantam, in the isle of Java, a traveler came across a strange race called the Badui, who live entirely isolated in a sacred village the inhabitants of which may never number more or less than forty souls. If there is an undue increase, an emigration takes place; if the number falls under the limit, outsiders are adopted. No strange foot may violate their bounds, and they habitually address strangers as their inferiors.

DOCTORS OF LETTERS.—Literature is honored in Corea as in other Eastern countries; but the monument erected over the graves of the doctors of letters is at least unique. It consists of the trunk of a tree painted like a barber's pole some thirty feet up. The top and branches are cut off, and on the summit rests a carved figure of slim proportions, twenty feet long, and with a forked tail in imitation of a Corean dragon. From the head, which resembles that of an alligator, depend cords on which brass bells and a wooden fish are strung.

IN OLD TIMES.—The dinner table of the ancient Egyptians was sometimes covered with a linen cloth imitating palm leaves, sometimes left uncovered. Plates and knives, but not forks, were in common use. In place of the latter were short-handled spoons of gold, silver, ivory, tortoise-shell, or alabaster. The dinner-table was circular; ornamented rolls of wheaten bread were placed before each guest; and supplies of the same were heaped in gay-looking baskets on the sideboard. They had also glasses, decanters, and goblets.

CHESTNUTS.—The word "chestnut," says a literary authority, which unfortunately is passing into disuse as slang, ought not to be lost. It expresses an idea—and that is the mission of every new word born into the language. "Chestnuts" had such a mission. It is a word forced into popular acceptation to describe old and stale jokes, old and stale proverbs, anything that is old and stale in humor, philosophy, literature or journalism, which is reproduced as a novelty. The word represents this thought, and it ought not to be retired from public life.

A PET CROW.—In the camp of a New York regiment was a pet crow belonging to a soldier. This crow had but one leg. It was fed in the presence of other crows, that looked with wonder at its fearlessness. They evidently supposed his loss of a leg accounted for the care he received, for one day, when it was whistled for to come to its dinner, a crow stopped from a crowd of visiting crows, hopped on one leg to the soldier, ate heartily, and hopped twenty feet away. Then it let down its other leg which had been hidden under its wing, and flew away.

THE BURGLAR.—The burglar meets with a characteristic defence from the playwright Gilbert, who says of him: "An unarrested burglar gives employment to innumerable telegraph clerks, police officers, railway officials, and possibly also to surgeons, coroners, undertakers and monumental masons. As soon as he is in custody the services of a whole army of solicitors, barristers, judges, grand and petty jurymen, reporters, governors of jails and prison warders are called into requisition. Really the burglar does more good than harm."

NUMBER OF PLANTS.—Over 200,000 different plants are known to botanists. Of these it is estimated that 376 varieties are found in bogs and swamps, 140 on the seashore, 128 on cultivated ground, 121 in meadows and pastures, 78 in sand removed from the seashore, 136 in the dense forest shades, 76 on limestone ledges, 64 in English heaths, 30 on walks, 27 on rocks and 19 on salt marshes. The remainder are distributed in many other ways. On one square foot of ground over 100 different kinds of plants have been known to grow. The seeds are distributed by the winds, birds and insects.

GERMAN BULLS.—The Germans would seem to have set their affections upon the Irish bull. Here are some specimens—"After the door closed," writes a novelist, "a soft female foot slipped into the room, and with her own hand extinguished the taper." "The chariot of revolution," says a Berlin journalist, "is rolling and gnashing its teeth as it rolls." "The Ladies' Benefit Association," notes a reporter, "has distributed twenty pairs of shoes among the poor, which will dry up many a tear." "I was sitting," writes another novelist, "at the table, enjoying a cup of coffee, when a gentle voice tapped me on the shoulder. I looked round and saw my old friend again."

SUMMER IS GONE.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

Summer is fading; the broad leaves that grew
  So freshly green when June was young and fall-
  ing;
And all the whisper-haunted forest through,
  The restless birds in saddened tones are calling
From rustling hazel copse and tangled dell,
    "Farewell, sweet summer,
    Fragrant, fruity summer,
    Sweet farewell!"

Upon the windy hill, in many a field,
  The honey bees hum slow above the clover,
Gleaning the latest sweets its bloom can yield,
  And knowing that their harvest time is over,
Sing half a lullaby and half a knell,
    "Farewell, sweet summer,
    Honey-laden summer,
    Sweet farewell!"

The little brook that bubbles 'mid the ferns,
  O'er twisted roots and sandy shallows playing,
Seems fain to linger in its eddied turns,
  And with a plaintive, purring voice is saying,
Sadder and sweeter than my song can tell,
    "Farewell, sweet summer,
    Warm and dreamy summer,
    Sweet farewell!"

The fitful breeze sweeps down the winding lane,
  With gold and crimson leaves before it flying,
Its gusty laughter has no sign of pain,
  But in the lull it sinks in gentle sighing,
And mourns the summer's early broken spell,
    "Farewell, sweet summer,
    Rosy, blooming summer,
    Sweet farewell!"

So bird and bee and brook and breeze make moan,
  With melancholy song their loss complaining;
I, too, must join them as I walk alone
  Among the sights and sounds of summer's waning;
I, too, have loved the season passing well—
    So, farewell, summer,
    Fair but faded summer,
    Sweet farewell!

A PERILOUS GAME;

—OR,—

Her Mad Revenge.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XX.—[CONTINUED.]

LADY BETTY shook her head.

"No, Bruce, not a word. I have written to her, begging her to relieve us of this terrible suspense with one word; but she has not sent it."

"Go!" he said, pointing to the door, and the two went out, leaving Lady Blanche standing there with her hand before her eyes.

She stood thus for a moment or two, then she ventured to look at him.

He was sitting in the chair still, his face turned from her.

She went up to him and knelt beside him.

"Bruce—dear, dear Bruce—be brave. Oh, Bruce! she is not worth it, she is not, indeed!"

He turned his head, and she started and shrank back.

His face was deathly white to the lips, his eyes filled with a despair that seemed to have transformed him into an old man.

For a moment he appeared unable to speak, then he put his hand on her shoulder.

"Blanche," he said hoarsely, almost inaudibly, as the voice of a man at death's door, "you can do me no good! Leave me to myself!"

"But—but——" she cast a quick, fearful glance round the room; his pistol case stood on a side table, and there was despair, frenzy on his face.

He smiled, an awful smile.

"No, Blanche, do not be afraid! I shall not do that. Will you go now?"

She got up slowly. She longed, with a longing past expression, to throw her arms round him, to pour out the passionate love of her heart at his feet, to remind him that there was still one who was faithful, but she dared not, dared not!

She had gone to the length of her tether for the present; for the future?—well it lay in the hands of the gods!

Slowly she retreated from him, and left him, left him still sitting with his head bowed, and the awful look in his grey face.

His valet found him still sitting there, when he entered an hour afterwards, and was dismissed with a gesture; he found him still sitting, like a figure carved in stone, in the morning, and ventured to touch and speak to him.

At the touch Lord Norman looked up at him vaguely, then rose, rose with the stiff movement and gait of extreme age.

"We start for London by the first train," he said, in a hollow voice.

The man packed the portmanteau, and they started in the early morning almost like thieves, for Lord Norman had bidden him keep their departure secret.

They reached London in the evening, and the whole of the night Lord Norman sat in his room, as he had sat at Ballyfloe, his eyes fixed on the ground, his grey face set into a marble calm.

In the morning he went to his solicitor's and obtaining the address of Mr. Morrel, drove to his office.

Mr. Morrel was considerably startled at the apparition, as he almost deemed it, of the once handsome, light-hearted earl against whom he had fought so long.

"I—I am afraid you are ill, my lord!" he said, with his nervous sharpness.

Lord Norman waved all commonplace greetings aside.

"I have come to learn what you know of—of Miss Carlisle!" he said, sternly.

Mr. Morrel flashed. He felt a strong temptation to answer at once, and tell all, but he had given his promise, and he was a lawyer.

"Be seated, my lord," he said.

Lord Norman declined the chair.

"I ask you for Miss Carlisle's present address," he said, with a terribly significant calmness.

Mr. Morrel shook his head.

"I deeply regret, my lord, that I am unable to furnish you with Miss Carlisle's address," he said, gravely.

"Do you know it?"

"Yes, my lord; I know it."

"And you withhold it at her request?" he demanded, his dark eyes gleaming from his white face.

"I do, my lord. I gave Miss Carlisle my solemn undertaking that I would keep her whereabouts a secret. It is with the deepest regret——"

Lord Norman took up his hat and went to the door, then he paused, and facing round, looked steadily into the lawyer's nervous and embarrassed countenance.

"You can communicate with Miss Carlisle, I presume?"

"Certainly, my lord. I shall be happy to forward any message——"

"Tell her, please," he said, in a low, clear voice, "that she has nothing to fear from me; but that if he should chance to cross my path I will shoot him as I would a dog! That is all!" and he slowly turned and went out.

Mr. Morrel gasped for breath for a moment.

"Phew!" he exclaimed. "Tut, tut! That is it, is it? Now, who would have thought it of such a quiet, beautiful girl? Tut, tut! But as to giving her his message—no, no, really I think it would be better to say nothing about him. Dear me! dear me! Looked half mad! Tut, tut! I can understand now why she insisted upon changing her name! Poor girl! I wonder what the rights of the story are, after all? Shoot him—who is 'him,' now—like a dog! No, no, my lord, I can't send such a message as that!"

And so good little Mr. Morrel decided to say nothing about Lord Norman's visit, and thus another opening door was closed against Floris's good angel!

CHAPTER XXI.

IF I were asked which was the most beautiful month in the year," said a famous French traveler, "I should answer May; and if you asked me where I would choose to spend it, I should say—Florence."

It was May, a lovely, balmy, pleasantly-smiling May, and Florence was looking at its best.

The cruel winds which fall upon it, howling like a lost spirit during the long winter months, had fled wailing—probably to England!

There was the scent of flowers—is not Florence the city of flowers?—in the air; from the hills around the city came balmy breezes laden with summer scents and sounds; an indefinable brightness and freshness seemed to sparkle in the atmosphere, glittering in the little Arno, which the recent rains had almost swollen into bigness, and which danced and ran through the city laughing with its sense of importance and picturesqueness.

Little children played along the riverside and on the bridges, singing and laughing, for your Florentine child "sings all the time," as the Americans say; from the churches arose the faint, melodious tinkle proclaiming the hour of divine worship; flower girls—and Florence is full of them—flitted to and fro, their gold earrings shining in the sun, their eyes liquid emotional, as only an Italian's can be, looking to right and left in search of customers.

Every now and then a silent monk, or a black-robed priest, passed with serene step and peaceful face; and with the early morning traffic, carriages rolled easily along the principal thoroughfare.

In a word, it was Florence at her best in the bright May morning, with the hard, cold winter far away in the background and the breath of summer floating out towards her.

On one of the bridges, and leaning against the stonework and looking down at the river was a young girl.

She was dressed in mourning—not heavy crape, stiff and hideous, but of simple black merino, relieved by a touch of white lace or linen at the sleeves and throat.

Her slim figure was as graceful as even an Italian's could be, though she was English, and not of the sunny south.

She was a very beautiful girl was this young lady who stood so quietly and dreamily, and her face and figure were apparently well known in Florence, for every now and then some flower-girl, or laborer in his blouse, would nod and bow, and give her "good even" in the soft, liquid Florentine tongue.

It was pleasant then to see the soft little smile that lit up the exquisite loveliness of her face, but alas! not pleasant to see how quickly the smile faded, leaving the pale face as sad as before.

It was a very lovely face even in that city of lovely faces, and the people had elected to call her, not by the name she had assumed, Lilian Wood, but "the pretty English lady!" and there were many who were pleased at winning a smile from her sweet sad face as at drawing the copper coins from the grand people who rode lazily through the parks or crawled languidly along the quays.

Amongst the English at Florence it had been quite an amusement, during the long winter months, to guess at the history of the graceful English girl who was seen so often in her solitary walks about the city; but not one of the chatter-boxes ever imagined for a moment that the girl who lived in the little house at the corner of the square, with the eccentric old Mrs. Sinclair and who was called Lilian Wood, was none other than Floris Carlisle, once so nearly Countess of Norman!

Floris had come to Florence in the beginning of the winter, with a heart that was too heavy, as Dante says, to ache much, and had found a quiet but not unfriendly welcome from the lady who had engaged her.

Mrs. Sinclair was one of those eccentric people who permit themselves to be absorbed by an idea, and give up everything in life to the pursuit of it.

Mrs. Sinclair's great ambition was to write an exhaustive work on botany.

She was passionately fond of flowers, and had made them her study ever since she was a girl; but the book had not got itself written yet, though she was now an old woman with white hair and failing eyesight.

It was in consequence of this failing eyesight that she had advertised for a young girl to assist her, and she soon found that she had secured a treasure in Floris.

Their lives were of the most secluded character.

"I am an old woman who spent her days in communion with the silent world of flowers, and in shunning my fellow-mortals my dear," she had said to Floris on the evening of her arrival. "I never go out beyond my garden; I see no one but the clergyman and an old professor, and I am afraid you will find it very dull; but I think I warned Mr. Morrel of that fact. I did not conceal anything!"

"I shall not find it dull," said Floris, with her sweet, sad smile, "and it cannot be too quiet. It was because of what you said that I have come."

"Then we shall get on nicely, I am sure," said the old lady, looking at her thoughtfully through her spectacles. "Mr. Morrel tells me that you have had great trouble; there, I won't speak of it! No good is done by talking of past sorrow; there is only one thing to do; live it down! You must try and do that, my dear."

"I have begun to try already," said Floris gently.

The old lady was silent for a moment, then she said—

"Your name is Lilian Wood, is it not?"

"No!" said Floris, with a flush of color in her pale face, but with a frank truthfulness in her eyes that was very touching. "That is not my name, but I would like to be known by it."

The old lady nodded.

"I think I understand, my dear," she said. "You shall be Lilian Wood if you wish it while you are with me. I know enough from Mr. Morrel to feel sure that it is from no unworthy motive that you conceal your right name."

"Thank you," Floris said simply, and her eyes glistened.

"Very well! Then we understand each other, and I am sure that we shall get on very nicely. You will not find me a hard task-mistress. I want a companion, not a slave, and I shall not overwork you," she added, with a smile, "though they all tell me I am too fond of overworking myself. Oh, yes! we shall get on together!"

And her words had proved true in every respect.

Floris's work was not difficult; for two hours in the morning and an hour in the evening she was occupied in making notes and copying extracts for the great work; the rest of the time was at her own disposal and she disposed of it in learning Italian in the quietude of her own room, or wandering dreamily about the beautiful city.

To all intents and purposes, so completely was her present life divided from the old one that Floris Carlisle might indeed have been dead and Lilian Wood have sprung from her ashes.

Mrs. Sinclair had no friends besides the clergyman and the professor; no English newspaper ever entered the house; no tidings of the great world on the other side of the channel ever reached the Violet Villa, as it was called, and Floris knew nothing of Lord Norman's accident and illness, guessed nothing of the plot which Lady Blanche and Oscar Raymond had so skilfully woven and put in execution.

At times, so completely had she drifted away from her old self, she was half persuaded that the girl Floris Carlisle, who had been betrothed to Lord Norman, was but a creature of her imagination.

The winter had been a cruel one. The cold wind had swept through the valley like a blast of ice; but she was young and strong, and the cold had acted as a tonic on her weakness; and though her face was still pale, the beauty which Bruce had loved so much and been so proud of came back to it, the dark, eloquent eyes lost something sometimes of their sadness.

Then the place itself acted as a balm to her wounded heart.

There is no more romantic, fascinating city in Italy.

The air is full of the vague perfume of an historic past; beauty seems to have set its seal on even the commonplace objects within the city's charmed circle.

There is always an echo of music in its streets, always an atmosphere of arts within its precincts.

And all this entered in Floris's soul with healing force.

She wandered, often solitary and alone, from gallery to gallery, standing in rapt gaze before some famous picture, and losing herself and her sorrows in contemplation of the glorious works of past age.

But oftener still she found herself in the vast, solemn cathedral, with its deep and mystic air of religious calm.

Here on her knees, with her fair face hidden in her hands, she found a truer peace and more abiding consolation than she could find in the world outside.

The people knew her and in their simple way grew to respect and love her.

Her hand was always outstretched towards the beggar's open palm, her eyes always full of pity for the old and helpless.

The children in her path soon grew to know "the pretty English lady," and to invent little plots to get her to stop and speak to them.

It was no uncommon sight to see her seated on one of the seats by the river with some tiny mite in her lap, and half-a-dozen round her knees.

Children are quick at finding out a friend, and, as Florence is full of children, Floris had plenty of perhaps truest friends the world holds.

The winter passed, and the spring came, and during the long months she had been fulfilling Mrs. Sinclair's prophecy and "living it down."

This May evening, as she leant over the bridge and watched the water sparkling in the past at the same moment, and it seemed to her as if it were hidden by a veil which was growing thicker and denser with each succeeding month.

But a veil can easily be drawn aside, and she knew that at the sight of Bruce's face, at the sound of his voice, this veil would be rent asunder, and all the past, with its infinite love and infinite despair, come back.

Even at this moment she was wondering where he was—whether he was married to Lady Blanche—whether he was happy? Whether he had quite forgotten her, quite forgotten the Floris Carlisle whose love he had won and whose heart he had tortured and thrown aside?

With a faint smile she put back a silken tress of hair that the soft evening breeze had blown across her forehead, and murmured the words of an old song she had read the night before—

"For Love is constant—when he wills,
  And fickle—when he chooses;
He plays a game with hearts for stakes,
  And seldom loses!"

Love had not lost in her case, alas! He had won her heart and soul and flown away upon the wind laughing!

The bells rose softly on the evening air; the early twilight was growing into dusk, and with a last look at the river she turned and went towards the Violet Villa.

She was passing down the street when she remembered that she had promised to go to the library for a book for Mrs. Sinclair, and retraced her steps.

The library was at some distance, but the evening was her own, and she could remain in the streets without the fear of sinning against propriety which would have beset her in London or Paris; besides, she was used to walking alone.

Slowly, dreamily, she crossed the bridge and reached the library.

She stood talking to the librarian, to whom she was known, then she set off for home.

By this time the evening had become night, the lamps had been lit, and the hills beyond the city were covered with a mantle of darkness.

With her book under her arm she was walking quietly through a narrow street when, suddenly, there came upon the drowsy, shadowy silence the sound of men's voices raised in anger.

There was no one in the street excepting a couple of children at play in the road and a woman lolling at a door, and Floris was wondering whence the sound proceeded when, from the house opposite which she was standing, two men came out.

They came out hurriedly; the foremost one in silence, the other one vociferating in the sharp, excited Italian fashion.

Something in the appearance of the first man attracted Floris's attention, as she stepped back to allow them to pass she saw that he was an Englishman.

It almost seemed to her for the moment as if she had seen him before, and she looked at him with a quick, frightened pulsation of her heart.

He was particularly handsome, with a pair of dark, flashing eyes, and all the manner of a young man, though his hair, cut close to the head, was grey—almost white—and his face close shaven.

It was a singularly striking face, and it affected Floris strangely; why, she did not know.

He did not see her, and would have walked past with a quick though not hurried step, but the man who followed him sprang forward and seized him by the arm.

The first man turned and faced him coolly enough, but with a glitter in his eyes that made Floris tremble.

"Well!" he said, in Italian, but with an English accent.

"You shall not go! Hear me! I say you shall not go!" said the man who held him, vehemently. "You—you English are all alike, you win our money and then, bouf! you fly! Come back!"

"Thanks, no!" said the Englishman, with a smile that was more exasperating in its cool sang-froid than any verbal retort.

"You will not!" shouted the other, through his set teeth.

"Certainly not!" replied the Englishman. "Why should I? I have won your money; is that what you complain of? You have won enough of mine, my friend."

The Italian ground his teeth.

"You are a cheat!" he hissed.

The Englishman laughed.

"You ought to know a brother-artist when you see him, certainly," he retorted quietly. "You are an authority on the subject whom I should not care to dispute."

"You mean——?" snarled the Italian.

"Just this, my friend—that if I had not cheated, as you call it, occasionally, I should have stood little chance against you who cheat always! Good even."

And with a simple movement he wrenched the man's hand from its frenzied clutch and turned away.

At the moment, while Floris was thanking her stars that the affair had ended and that she was free to go on her way, the Italian raised his hand, something gleamed brightly in the murky gaslight, the Englishman uttered a sharp cry, and felt and staggered up against the post of the doorway in which she hid.

A moment afterwards the man who had struck the blow darted round a corner, and was swallowed up as completely as if the earth had opened for his convenience.

Floris uttered a cry of alarm and terror, and turned fearfully and pityingly to the wounded man.

He had sunk on to the pavement, and was lying with his face upturned to the gaslight, his eyes closed and his hands clenched.

Crying for help as loudly as she could, she knelt down beside him and raised his head.

Even at that moment some faint, vague sensation of having seen him before came over her like a wave; but she could not trace this feeling to its source.

With the click-clack of her wooden shoes, the woman who had been lolling at the door came across the road, screaming as she ran.

The street, so silent a minute ago, seemed to start into life as if by magic, and a crowd gathered round the two figures—the prone man with his white face, and the kneeling girl with her gentle, pitying one.

"Ah, but he is dead!" whispered a man, clicking his teeth.

"No, no!" said Floris. "He is not dead! Oh, is there no one who will help me!"

The crowd shrugged their shoulders eloquently.

No one wanted a dead man, least of all a sick man, on his hands.

"The police will be here presently—all in good time," said a woman coolly, and her companions appeared to think that nothing better could be done than wait for their arrival.

In despair Floris took out her handkerchief and attempted to staunch the wound, and someone thrusting a bottle into her hand she poured some of the contents through the set teeth.

In another moment the police came up, the crowd drew back, and the officer proceeded to examine the wounded man.

When he saw that he was an Englishman his interest increased at once.

"Ah, English! A friend of yours, madam?"

"No, no!" said Floris; "I do not know him; I never saw him before to-night. Is he badly hurt?" she asked, trembling.

The officer looked at her suspiciously. Her hand was stained with blood, her face white and agitated.

"Signora must accompany us," he said, politely enough.

Floris started and shrank back. Some of the policemen raised the wounded man and carried him off, and only the officer remained, firmly but courteously insisting that Floris should go with him.

Then, plucking up courage, the woman who had been lolling against the doorway volubly explained that Floris was quite innocent, and volunteered to go to the station and give evidence of the fact.

The officer accepted her version of the affair, took Floris's address, and, with a polite bow, strode off after his men.

Scarcely daring to believe in her escape, Floris hurried home.

Agitated and excited, she went into the library, where Mrs. Sinclair sat poring over a large volume of plates of one of her favorite authors.

She looked up absently as Floris came on like a vision of loveliness, a little flushed and wild-eyed.

"How late you are, my dear! Have you got the book?"

Floris started with a gesture of dismay. She had dropped it as she knelt beside the man, and had left it on the pavement.

"The book! I have lost it!" she said, and she began to tell her story.

Mrs. Sinclair listened with an abstracted air.

"You were fortunate in getting off so easily, my dear. I am afraid you must not be out after dusk. Florence is a great deal quieter than it used to be, but it is not quite Arcadian yet. I remember the time when one used to think nothing of seeing men stab each other in the streets."

Floris shuddered.

"I can see the glitter of the knife or whatever it was now," she murmured.

"You are upset, my dear. Take off your things and rest before going upstairs. There is your tea there; I am afraid it is cold though," and the next instant Mrs. Sinclair was bending over her book again.

Floris was sipping her tea half-an-hour afterwards, when the servant announced the clergyman.

He was a very old gentleman, very greatly respected and beloved by the English community in Florence, and a constant visitor at the Violet Villa.

"I am late this evening, dear madam," he said, after exchanging greetings. "But I was detained on my road hither by an accident."

He addressed the latter sentence to Floris, for the old lady had once more gone back to her book.

"An accident?" said Floris.

"Yes," he said, serenely. "I was crossing the road by the hospital when the porter ran across and called me in. A man had been brought in who had been stabbed in the streets."

Floris started and put down her tea-cup.

"He was an Englishman, and that is why they sent for me, of course. I found the poor fellow in the surgeon's hands, and very much exhausted. It appears that he was stabbed while coming out of a house in one of the streets off the square. I suspect it was a quarrel arising from some gambling transaction. His account of the affair was not very clear; indeed, he seemed anxious to hush the matter up, and was very reticent."

"Is he very badly wounded?" asked Floris in a slow voice.

The clergyman shook his head.

"No, only slightly, not dangerously; at any rate he recovered very quickly and, strange to say, has left the hospital. They tried to persuade him to remain, but he resolutely declined and came out with me."

"Is it possible?" breathed Floris.

The old gentleman smiled.

"He is an Englishman!" he said, as if that explained the man's obstinacy. "An Italian, now would have given in and laid there for a month. Poor fellow, I happen to know a great deal about him."

"Yes?" said Floris. A strange curiosity, not unnatural, however, had taken possession of her.

"Yes. He is a well-known man in Florence, and bears, I am sorry to say, too famous a character as a gambler. He came here, why, dear me, a few weeks before your arrival, my dear Miss Wood. A rich man it was reported, at any rate he seemed to be in possession of a large sum of money and, for a time lived in great style. He became a member of one of the fastest clubs here, and soon got himself known as a man who played continually and for large stakes. Then he disappeared for a time, and I heard that he had caught the fever. Perhaps that accounts for the change which I observed in him this evening; his hair, which was dark, has become almost grey, as is sometimes the case with young men with black hair. A dangerous character, my dear young lady."

"Dangerous?" echoed Floris, enquiringly.

"Yes, a man blessed by Fortune with a handsome face and splendid physique, and yet without principle. I never met a man with more polished and charming manners. This afternoon, though in great pain, doubtless, his ready smile and cool, well-bred air were irresistible. He thanked me, though I had only spoken half-a-dozen words to him as if I had saved his life."

"And he is not in the hospital, is not dangerously wounded?" said Floris; "and I thought he had been killed, for I saw it all" and she, told him the story.

He shook his head gravely.

"You must not go about the city by yourself so much; my dear Miss Wood. As regards this unpleasant affair, I will call at the office of police to-morrow and see that you are not troubled any further."

"His name is Raymond, Oscar Raymond."

Floris turned the name over in her mind for fully a minute, but she could not recollect ever having heard it before.

"I think I will go to bed," she said, with a little smile. "The excitement has made me very tired. I am very glad he was not badly hurt, and I hope I shall never see another man stabbed, though they do think so little of it in Florence."

She went up stairs to her room, and setting her lattice back, looked out on to the city with its countless lights beaming like fireflies in the darkness; but it was not of Florence or the scene she had seen in the streets she was thinking; strangely unaccountably, her thoughts had travelled backwards to Lord Norman, and more clearly than she had seen him for months past his face rose before her mental vision. And yet it did not occur to her that the face of the wounded man, Oscar Raymond, was like that of her last lover.

Perhaps if Oscar Raymond's hair had been black and he had worn a moustache, the resemblance would have been too great to escape her notice, but in the six months of dissipation Oscar Raymond had altered and aged considerably, and it would have been impossible for him to repeat the comedy which had proved a tragedy for Floris Carlisle!

CHAPTER XXII.

THREE weeks passed and the routine of Floris's life went on unbroken like the daily round of a well-made clock, and she had almost "remembered to have forgotten" the incident of the gambling fray. She had so far forgotten it that she had resumed her old solitary wanderings about the city, and one afternoon was seated under the trees in the square with a book in her hand, and her eyes fixed on the empurpled hills, when she became conscious that someone was standing beside her.

She awoke from her reverie with a start, and was startled to see the Englishman she had last seen lying on the cold stones, standing quietly at her elbow.

He raised his hat as she looked up, and his dark eyes met her startled gaze with a calm but earnest appeal in them.

"Do not be alarmed, I beg of you," he said, in a soft grave voice. "I fear that I have startled you?"

"No—a little perhaps," said Floris, looking up at him slowly.

She noticed as she did so that his face was more pale and haggard than when she had first seen it, and that his left hand was thrust in the fold of his coat.

His hair, too, seemed to have grown white, but, as is often the case, it lent a distinguished air to his face, difficult to define, though distinct enough.

With a woman's quick appreciation Florence thought that the old clergyman had spoken truly: the man was very handsome.

"This is the second time I have been unfortunate enough to alarm you," he said, gently, and with a touch of genuine self-reproach and regret in his voice. "I beg you to forgive me."

"There is nothing to forgive," said Floris, calmly.

"Yes, there is a great deal," he said, gravely. "I have not forgotten"—he stopped, as if uncertain how to proceed, then went on after a pause—"I fear I must have been the cause of great uneasiness and alarm to you. I wish that my friend had made his rash attempt half-an-hour sooner or later."

It was said so coolly, with such an utter lack of resentment against the man who had attempted his life, that Floris gazed at him with renewed interest.

"I am glad that you are better, that you were not badly hurt. "I mean," she added, glancing at his arm, "that you were not killed."

"Oh, it was nothing," he said, quietly; but it might have been worse but for you, madam."

"For me?" with a quick glance of surprise.

"Yes," he said, in a low voice. "You staunched the wound in time; they said at the hospital that my recovery owed everything to that."

Floris looked down.

"I did very little; I was too frightened. But"—with another upward glance—"how did you know it was I?"

"I saw you for a moment as the blow was struck, and at the hospital they gave me this."

And he took from inside the breast of his coat her handkerchief.

Floris colored.

"My handkerchief!" she murmured. "I had forgotten it."

And she held out her hand.

He was looking at the handkerchief with a strange intent expression in his eyes, and it dwelt in them still as he turned them on her and held out the handkerchief with a reluctance which, though not marked, Floris did not fail to notice.

"I would have returned it sooner," he said, "but the police—they are always fond of mystery—declined to give me your name. Perhaps they were right, yes, they were quite right—you had suffered enough annoyance. Not having your name, I was forced to wait and watch for you. I have seen you twice before, but not alone, and I wanted to see you alone and thank you."

Floris inclined her head. It affected her, this knowledge that she had been watched and waited for by this strange man.

He stood beside her silently for a moment, then he said—

"There was something else of yours, madam, which fell into my hands. A book ——"

"Yes," said Floris quickly.

"It was picked up close by the spot where I fell; and they gave it me under the impression that it belonged to me. I will restore it you if you will tell me where I may bring it."

"Send it to the Violet Villa," said Floris, "if you please."

He bowed. Floris was about to rise and give him good-day when he spoke again.

"You are fond of flowers, study them, madam?"

"Yes," said Floris.

"I judged so from the contents of the book. I also am fond of flowers. I have a collection, a poor one, but there are some rarities amongst it. Should I be asking too much if I begged you to accept of two specimens, madam?"

He spoke with such gravity and respect that Floris could not find it in her heart to refuse the offer.

"I have a friend who will be very glad to have them;" she said, simply. "I am her assistant, and the book was for her use, not mine. Will you send them to the Violet Villa?"

"I will," he said.

Floris rose.

"Good-morning!" she said. "I am glad to find that you are able to be out!"

"I have not been out of doors since—for three weeks—until two days ago, madam," he said with a smile

"Oh!" said Floris, pityingly. "Then why did you insist on leaving the hospital so quickly? Why did you not remain there and let them nurse you? You would have got better so much sooner there with all those clever doctors."

"No doubt," he said quietly, his dark eyes resting on hers respectfully; "but I had my reasons. Consider, madam, if I had remained there would have been a legal enquiry, you would have had to appear before the court——"

Floris colored.

"It was on my account then——" she said, then stopped.

A faint wave of color flitted across his handsome face, making it tenfold more handsome.

"Forgive me! but yes, that was my reason. Oh, think nothing of it! A dog would have had sense enough and gratitude enough to think of that."

Floris stood still and looked at him.

There was something about him that fascinated her. She remembered what the old clergyman had said of this man's irresistible manner; but at the same time she remembered what he had said about the man's character.

With a little flush she inclined her head.

"I am much obliged to you. Yes; it was considerate of you,—but I fear you have suffered a great deal in consequence."

He waved his right hand.

"Madam, I would willingly endure a great deal of pain if I could erase that night's experience from your memory; but in mine it lingers—and will ever linger—as something very precious."

He bowed at the last words, and raised his hat and walked slowly away.

Floris went home in a strange condition of mind.

The man's manner—his words, had affected her curiously.

She found herself going over them in her mind with a wild sense of having heard them before, or rather having heard the voice before.

She said nothing to Mrs. Sinclair of the meeting, but set to work that evening with a strong determination to forget the whole occurrence.

In the morning, a messenger from one of the hotels brought a packet and a note addressed to Miss Lilian Wood.

With an unusual tremor, Floris opened it.

It contained in addition to her book, a packet enclosing half-a-dozen dried specimens of what she knew at a glance were rare flowers, and a note. It ran as follows—

"Madam,—I send the book which I found, and the flowers. It would afford me a deep satisfaction if you would allow me to offer you the remainder of my collection, which I hold as useless unless it prove of value in your eyes.

"Yours very truly, OSCAR RAYMOND."

Floris sat and pondered over this note for some moments; then she went and bodily carried both flowers and note to Mrs. Sinclair.

The old lady listened indifferently enough until Floris came to the flower part of the story, then she woke to interest, and seized the specimens and uttered a cry of delight.

"My dear girl, where did you get these? Who gave them to you? Where did you say? His collection! Whose?"

Floris explained.

"Accept them? Rob the man of such treasures? Impossible, of course! But I must see it! If the rest are anything as good as this it must be priceless? What is his address?"

Floris named the hotel.

"Write to him at once, and ask him to call," said the old lady.

Floris hesitated a moment then she went to her writing-table and wrote a short note, thanking him for the flowers and book, and requesting him to call on Mrs. Sinclair.

She signed the note of course, with her assumed name, Lilian Wood, and she resolved that if he should accept the invitation she would not appear.

On the morrow he came, and was shown into the library, and as the door was opened for him Floris passed out into the drawing-room.

When she heard the servant let him out of the house, she returned to the library to find that Mrs. Sinclair was even more fascinated than she herself had been.

"That is a wonderful young man you have discovered, my dear!" she said, with unwonted enthusiasm.

"I discovered!" said Floris, elevating her eyebrows.

"Well, well; it was through you!" said the old lady, impatiently. "At any rate, I am much obliged to you. I don't know when I have enjoyed a visit more. He doesn't know very much about botany, but what he does know he knows thoroughly; and he has travelled. There does not seem to be any place that he does not know. Ah, that is where men have the advantage over us poor women! He is coming here to-morrow to tea, and will bring some specimens with him."

Floris leant over her.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CUSTOMS AT TABLE.—The Chinese consider the stomach the source of intellectual life, and, therefore, the fattest man goes for the wisest one. They affect to believe that foreigners come to China to eat because they have not enough to eat at home. It is considered a mark of refined politeness to treat a guest or a visitor to a meal at any time of the day. Only those Chinamen who have families take their meals at home; the rest eat at hotels. They usually have two substantial meals a day—one an hour after getting up in the morning, the other between 3 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The well-to-do class take three or four meals a day. Often the father alone eats meat, while the rest of the family have to be satisfied with rice. Poor families usually get their meals from street venders. The well-to-do ones employ cooks, the latter getting their degrees and diplomas like men of science. The Celestials use no tablecloths, napkins, knives, forks, spoons, dishes, plates or glassware. Instead of napkins they use packages of thin, soft paper, which also serves them for handkerchief. After use, they throw them away. Each guest has saucer, a pair of sticks, a package of paper and a minute cup, with salt-saucer. The Chinese women never dine with the men. Everybody smokes durning the eating of a formal dinner, and the dinner is crowned by a story or legend narrated by some more or less known orator. No topic of general interest is discussed at such dinners, but a gastronomist who knows all about the preparing of food receives attention.

PAST AND FUTURE.

BY WILLIAM MACKINTOSH.

On a fair portrait drawn in long past years,
E'er yet we meet the world, its strife engage,
We gaze with pride, since to the eye appears
Soft youthful features clear of wrinkled age.

And it may hap we'll wonder what shall be
The visage worn in that blest land of joy—
If like to that the present's glass may see
For that which graced in days now the past, boy.

Or tho' with furrowed brow and locks of gray,
We drift into the narrow grave's dark gloom,
In the same form e'en at the Judgment day,
We may not issue from the earth's cold tomb.

But in a seeming, lithe, and strong, and free
From lines that bear the prints of care and time
And with glad eyes we all of Earth may see,
Wearing Youth's vigor in that deathless clime.

A Wife's Martyrdom.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX.—(CONTINUED.)

SHE started back the next moment in real alarm, for Angela had sprung from the ground, and stood before her with flashing eyes and burning face.

"Why should you not marry again?" she cried. "Oh, mamma, how can you ask such a question? You are my father's wife!"

"I am your father's widow, Angel," corrected Lady Rooden.

Withering scorn flashed from the girlish eyes.

"There is no difference!" she cried. "You told me yourself that my father had but gone before us. You said he would love us just the same. You told me that the boundaries which separated us were very narrow. You told me that love, true love, began in time and lived in eternity. Oh, mother, mother," she continued wildly, "what will you say to my father when you meet him as another man's wife? It is horrible to think of!"

"You speak too strongly, Angel," said Lady Rooden, in a trembling voice.

"I do not; I could not! Oh, mamma, forgive me, but it seems to me shameful! You, whom my father loved, you with whom he left his heart! If you had died first, my father would never have married again; he would have cherished your memory until death. How then, knowing this, can you love another man? You have the right to please yourself; but I repeat that it is shameful. It seems to me that it is a sin for my father's wife to marry another man."

"But, Angel," urged Lady Rooden, "you could not expect that I should live all the rest of my life alone."

"You are not alone, mamma; you have me with you."

"But you will marry some day, Angel, and then I should be alone."

"We need never be parted, mamma darling, even if I do marry; and, if you will give up this horrible marriage, I will promise you most solemnly never to leave you while I live."

"That is all nonsense, Angel. You must marry just as other girls do. Be reasonable my dear, and we shall all be happy. I am sure that in time you will learn to like Captain Wynyard."

The name gave a new turn to Angela's thoughts.

Hitherto she had realized nothing but the horror of the fact that her mother cared for another man; now she remembered who that man himself was, how from the first she had always mistrusted and disliked him.

She sank upon the ground at her mother's feet.

"Oh, mother," she sobbed, "it is like a hideous dream to me that you are going to put the man I dislike above all others in my father's place!"

"You will learn to like him in time," said Lady Rooden; "no one could help it."

But the scorn that flashed in her daughter's face was like a flame that scorched her.

"I like him," she cried, "when every honest impulse of my heart is against him? Never! The more I know of him the more I shall dislike and mistrust him. Oh, mother, you are so sensible in everything else! You choose your friends, your servants wisely; how is it you make such a terrible mistake in choosing a husband? Why does not your instinct, which is keen and true, rise against the man?"

"Hush, Angel—you are going too far!" said Lady Rooden. "You forget that I love him."

"Love him! Oh, mother, how can you love one who is ignoble, who has nothing but a handsome face—and even that is spoilt by a selfish and cruel expression!"

"The world does not say so," answered Lady Rooden; "the Captain is generally admitted to be one of the handsomest men in town."

"By people who do not look beneath the surface," cried Angela, "not by those who know how to read character, not by those who have keen observation. True, the face is handsome; but the character written upon it is that of a vain, selfish, cruel man. Oh, mother darling, if you will marry again if one love in a lifetime is not sufficient, choose wisely! Choose a man who in some degree resembles my father, one who is noble and good; choose with your judgment, darling, and not with your eyes!"

"Hush, Angel—you forget yourself! I am sorry my choice does not please you; but it pleases me, and that is the most important point to be considered. It is useless to discuss the matter in this spirit, as the time for the marriage is already settled."

Another cry of pain and distress escaped from the girl's lips.

"Settled, mamma! Do not say that! Oh, mother, by the love you bore my dead father, pause and think! How can I reach your heart? How can I make you feel what I myself feel so keenly? How can I make you read aright the character of the man whom you have idealized? You do not see him as he is, but as you believe and wish him to be. He is no hero, mother; he is cruel by nature—he is vain and full of self-love. Oh, mother, my darling, you have known the love of a noble man! You have been cherished and beloved by one of the worthiest men that ever lived, you have borne the name and shared the fortunes of one of the dearest and best of men; how can you put this other man in his place, all unworthy as he is to fill it? If it were any one else," cried Angela, wringing her hands with a gesture of bitter despair—"if it were but any other man we know! Mamma darling, the first moment I saw his face I disliked him, and I had a foreboding of coming evil that deepened each time I saw him; but I never dreamed that it would come to me in this shape. It seems hard and cruel for me to say it; but, mother darling, as surely as sun and moon shine, you will repent this foolish step. As surely as now you disbelieve me, so surely the time will come when you will cry to me for help in your distress. I foretell it."

"It will not follow, my dear, as a matter of necessity," said Lady Rooden, with a touch of sarcasm.

"Mother," Angela appealed again, "forget him; give up all thoughts of this marriage. Let us leave England and go back to the dreamy old Italian cities, and be happy as we were before. I will love you and take care of you—I will live with you always, and never leave you. I will do anything to save you from the hands of a man whom I dread and mistrust."

Lady Rooden was touched by the passionate appeal, by the misery of the beautiful young face and the pain in the entreating voice.

"My dearest Angela, I do not want to be what you call 'saved.' I love Vance Wynyard, and I wish to marry him."

"Mother," she urged earnestly, "I am certain that he loves Gladys Rane. I saw love in his face when he looked at her."

"And I, my dear Angel, am equally sure he does not. I asked him, and he told me so. He denied it most positively. He has been the spoiled darling of London society for many years, and I am, he assured me, the first woman he has ever loved."

"And you believe him?" asked the girl, who seemed suddenly to have grown so much older than her mother.

"Certainly I believe him, Angel. If he loves Gladys Rane, why should he not marry her?"

"Because she may not have money enough to tempt him," was the scornful answer. "Mother," continued the girl "as surely as the sun shines in the heavens you will repent it. If words or prayers of mine could but move you!"

"They cannot, Angel," said Lady Rooden serenely; "my mind is firmly made up."

"Harm will come of it, I am sure," declared Angela. "Oh, mother, can you not see that he wants to marry you for your money, while in his heart he loves Gladys Rane?"

"It is not true," cried Lady Rooden, with warmth; "and I will not have such things said of the man I have elected to marry. I forbid it, Angel. Unless you can speak of him with respect, keep silent."

"I will, mamma," she answered, with a long-drawn bitter sob. "But, darling, do you not see the evil beginning, how already he is coming between us? Our first unhappiness is caused by him."

"It is caused by your manner of speaking, Angel," retorted Lady Rooden. "You must not offend me again. You must not say that Captain Wynyard loves Gladys Rane, and you must not say that he does not love me, or that he is going to marry me for my money. I will not hear or tolerate any such disgraceful charges. If you wish to please me, you will learn to love and respect the man I am going to marry. Good night, Angel. You had better leave me. You will be calmer to-morrow."

"Yes," returned Angela; "I shall be calmer; but I shall never be happy again. To-night I have lost all that is best and brightest in my life; to-night my hope and happiness have died."

"You will be wiser to-morrow, Angel," said Lady Rooden coldly. "Now say 'Good night.'"

With weeping eyes and aching heart the girl bade her mother good night.

Coldly, for the first time in her life, she kissed the beautiful face—coldly, for the first time in her life, Lady Rooden dismissed her daughter; but, when the door had closed and the sound of the bitter sobs had died away, Lady Rooden felt very unhappy.

She asked herself if it were worth while to persist in this engagement which was so repugnant to Angel. Her answer to herself was "Yes."

After all, she had a perfect right to do as she would in a matter that so deeply affected her future happiness. She was not compelled, she argued with herself, to pass a long lonely life because her daughter had romantic ideas concerning what was due to her father's memory.

It was unheard of that a woman should decline to marry the man she loved simply because her daughter objected to him. It seemed to her both selfish and unkind that Angela should so bitterly oppose this her dearest wish.

Yet warm tears filled her eyes when she thought of her daughter's loyal love of her father. A vague foreboding came to her; but she drove it away.

To her there seemed nothing strange in the fact that Captain Wynyard should be deeply in love with her. She felt that she was beautiful enough to win and to keep the love of any man, and she could not understand why Angela should persistently deny that the Captain loved her, and persistently assert that it was for her money alone that he wanted to marry her.

If she were plain or old, one might believe such an assertion; but, being what she was, she argued to herself that it was impossible.

It was not with a feeling of unmixed happiness that Lady Rooden laid her head on her pillow.

Side by side with her love and her happiness was the memory of her daughter's sorrow and despair.

Angela could neither sleep nor rest; nor could she yet throughly realise the terrible blow that had fallen upon her.

Rood Abbey, which to her had always been the fairest spot on earth, her father's inheritance and his home, would now have a new master.

This man whom she instinctively disliked would take her father's place there, would use his rooms, rest in his favorite chairs, read his books, monopolise the love of his wife, usurp his place in every shape and way.

Her father's old servants would have to obey him; the tenants and dependants who had loved and respected her father must now transfer their allegiance to him.

"If he were worthy of it," she cried to herself, "I should not care so much; but he is not—he is not! He will make my mother miserable when the veil falls from before her eyes."

The first red flush of dawn was in the skies before Angela had wept herself to sleep.

CHAPTER X.

It was late when Angela woke the next morning, and even as her eyes opened a dark shadow seemed to settle upon her as she remembered that her mother was going to marry Captain Vance Wynyard. A weight as of lead lay upon her heart; her brain seemed bewildered.

"My misery is greater than I can bear!" she cried in an agony of despair.

It seemed impossible to her that she could again face the realities and duties of life.

Hitherto her first thought in the morning had been to fly as soon as she could to her mother, to kiss and caress her, to know what her plans were for the day, to find the fairest and sweetest of flowers for her, to show her every possible mark of love and attention.

Now she shrank from meeting her. Hitherto she had felt that her mother's waking thoughts were given to her, that her mother's first desire was to see her; but that would never happen again. Already a barrier had sprung up between them, and the girl's heart was desolate.

The pretty breakfast-room, usually redolent of roses, was empty when she entered; her mother was not there.

Thinking she was in the drawing-room, Angela made her way thither listlessly enough. She had opened the door and entered the room before she saw that Captain Wynyard was there too.

At the very sight of him her face flushed hotly and her heart began to beat violently. She would have withdrawn at once; but Lady Rooden saw her, and called to her. She looked at her mother's face, and that one glance caused her sharpest pain.

Never had she seen the beloved face so charming as now, lit up as it was with love and softened into deepest tenderness. On the face of the man by her side there was a smile of triumph, which only served to rise every antagonistic feeling in the young girl's breast.

"Angel, come here!" said Lady Rooden. "I have something to say to you."

Slowly, and with aversion in her eyes, she went up to her mother, Captain Wynyard noting keenly the expression of her face.

"She does not like me, and does not like the marriage," he said to himself. "I shall have an enemy in this slender girl; but it will not matter."

"Angel," went on Lady Rooden, "I am glad you came in. I want to speak to you."

Then a flush rose to her face, and a certain shyness came over her manner.

"Let me speak for you, dearest Laura," interrupted her lover; and Angela started at the words. Never since her father's death had she heard her mother addressed by that name. "I am sure that the daughter who loves you so dearly and so devotedly will be pleased to hear of anything which will add to your happiness." The Captain spoke fluently enough, and he turned his handsome face with a smile to Angela; but there was a certain uneasiness about him, a restraint that almost made his manner ungraceful, for he knew well in his heart he did not love this woman whom he was so anxious to make his wife. "Your mother," he continued, "has been so good and generous as to look upon me with favor, and I have promised to devote the remainder of my life to her. I shall do my best to make her happy; and with the love of the mother I hope to win the love of the daughter. I will do my best to deserve it."

As Vance Wynyard spoke, Angela's face grew white even to the lips. A burning feeling of hate rose in her heart against him.

She could not control it for a few minutes so as to answer him, and he, almost glad of her silence, went on—

"I promise you to devote myself to your interest, and, as far as I can, to fill worthily your father's place."

This unfortunate allusion to her father roused the girl at once. She raised her face to his with such an indignant flash of anger that, callous as he was, he quailed before it.

"We will leave my father's name quite out of the question. Let me say once for all that you will never fill his place, and that to my mind it is a desecration of his memory even to say such a thing. He was my mother's husband; he loved her; he was a noble-minded man."

"I hope in time to win your good opinion," he said. Vain, cold, and calculating as he was, there was something in the attitude of the girl standing at bay, as it were, that touched him.

"My dear Angel," cried Lady Rooden, "speak to Captain Wynyard; have you nothing to say in answer to his kindly words?"

"Nothing, mamma," she said, wringing her hands. "I have not a single word to say."

"Then, Vance," said Lady Rooden, turning to Captain Wynyard, "I must love you doubly, to atone for my daughter's ungraciousness.

Inwardly the Captain felt deeply mortified.

He had been so worshipped by women, he had always been so popular, he had always received such homage and adulation from the fairer sex, that his present experience with Miss Rooden was as unexpected as it was disagreeable.

But he knew that he must be diplomatic in this instance, and that to resent the girl's manner would be a fatal mistake; to be gentle, generous, and forgiving would impress Lady Rooden most favorably.

"I shall hope," he said suavely, "to win from Miss Rooden greater grace and greater kindness."

Then Angela raised her eyes to his; and there was something both pathetic and wistful in their expression.

"Captain Wynyard," she said, "my mother and I have been very happy together; we shall never be so happy again. Why do you want to marry her?"

Somewhat taken aback by so straightforward a question, he replied quickly nevertheless, and with great presence of mind—

"Because I love her, Miss Rooden."

"I do not believe it," said the girl promptly. "I am sure that you do not love her; and time will prove that I am right."

"Angel," cried Lady Rooden, "I have told you that I will not allow you to say such things!"

"I cannot help it, mamma," she answered. "It is the voice of my heart that speaks, and I cannot control it."

"Believe me," interposed Captain Wynyard, in his sweetest and suavest voice, "I quite understand; and, Miss Rooden, though some in my place might feel hurt, I do not, for I understand. I may say even that I admire you all the more for your fidelity to the memory of your father. I can only hope that as time rolls on you may judge me more favorably, and learn to like me better."

Lady Rooden felt quite a glow of pride as she heard these kindly words. How noble and generous he was!

Angela must surely come to like him in time.

The falsity that was so apparent to the daughter the mother could not detect—indeed she was more delighted than ever with her lover, more ready to resent her daughter's ungraciousness.

"Angel," she appealed again, "have you no answer to make to such kind words?"

"No, mamma," she replied sadly; "I have none. I trust more to my own instinct than to any words I hear."

"I will wait patiently," said the Captain gracefully. "I have been fortunate beyond all other men in winning the love of the mother; I shall never weary in trying to win the affection and confidence of the daughter."

"Oh, Angel," cried Lady Rooden, "I wonder how you can listen to such generous and noble words and not love the person who utters them!"

In spite of her distress, Angela could not help smiling at the utter simplicity of such a speech.

"I value the words, mamma," she said, "at their just worth."

And Lady Rooden, finding that the interview was not likely to be a pleasant one, thought it prudent to put an end to it.

She dismissed her daughter therefore with a few words, and Angela left the drawing-room without touching the hand that Captain Wynyard extended out to her.

She went to her room, and remained there until the bell rang for luncheon.

"I am so grieved," said Lady Rooden apologetically to her lover. "I saw last night, when I told Angela about our marriage, that she did not like the idea of it; but I never dreamed she would treat you as she has."

The Captain was on his guard. He felt angry, and resented Angela's manner hotly; but he was wise enough to see that assumed generosity would best answer his purpose.

"I hope, my dearest Laura," he responded, "you will think no more about it. I shall never resent Angela's dislike, but shall, on the contrary, do my very best to overcome it."

Lady Rooden kissed him.

"You are truly noble, Vance," she said,

"You make allowances for Angel. She certainly did worship her father."

"Quite right too," he replied; "and she shall love me if I can persuade her to do so. I should hardly have expected so much spirit from her," he continued; "but we will forget the incident. Trust to me, dearest Laura. Do not be even in the least degree unhappy about your daughter. It is hardly right for me to say it; but I have never met girl or woman yet who could refuse to care for me if I tried to make them."

"I do not wonder," said Lady Rooden, touching his handsome face gently with her white gemmed hands. "Every one must love you. But you have never cared for any one except me?" she whispered.

The dark, passionate, beautiful face of Gladys Rane rose before him as he bent over her, yet he kissed her, and vowed that she was his first love and would be his last.

"Let us speak now of our wedding-day, Laura darling," he said. "Can I persuade you to let it be the tenth of July? Why should we wait? I love you with all my heart, and shall never be happy again for one moment out of your presence. Why need we wait until August?"

"It seems so very soon," she objected shyly.

"There is no such thing as time in love," declared the Captain; and, after a few more persuasive words, Lady Rooden consented.

"We need not have any delay over marriage-settlements," he remarked carelessly; but there was a keen, shrewd look in his eyes which belied the lightness of his words. "Ah, Laura dearest, how I wish now that I had been more careful! How I regret that I have lavished my wealth in idle follies! I wish I had it all to lay at your feet."

And in the blindness of her love she responded—

"There can never be any question of money, Vance, between you and me. It matters little which has it. As it happens, I have enough for both."

CHAPTER XI.

WITH a passive despair Angela Rooden had yielded herself to what she saw was inevitable.

The world in general smiled upon the engagement of Lady Rooden and Captain Wynyard, and thought it a most excellent one.

The Captain had every advantage that high position and unbounded popularity could give him; her ladyship possessed unusual beauty and great wealth.

Few paused to think if the union were agreeable or not to her refined and sensitive daughter.

In the meantime the happiness of Lady Rooden was at its height.

Her engagement added to her popularity, and she herself was charmed at having one of the handsomest and most popular men in London by her side.

The state of things at Rood House was not quite so pleasant. As was natural, the Captain was almost continually there; and Angela, although she said nothing, plainly let it be seen that she resented his presence.

She felt that it was impossible now to secure a *tete-a-tete* with her mother.

There was an end to the pleasant little breakfasts in the morning-room, where they had discussed the events of the previous day and had arranged their plans for the next twenty-four hours; there was an end, in fact, to the happy intercourse which had always existed between mother and daughter.

When it was possible without showing any disrespect to Lady Rooden, Angela absented herself from the luncheon-table.

Captain Wynyard was always there.

He never omitted spending that hour at Rood House, and three or four times in the week he returned to dinner.

Lady Rooden usually made up a pleasant little party to meet him, and those evenings were full of positive torture to Angela.

The Captain was always most kind, most deferential and attentive to her, but he made no progress: her distrust only increased with her knowledge of him.

On those evenings when he did not dine at Rood House, he went with Lady Rooden to the Opera, or to the theatre or some ball.

Angela was invariably asked to accompany them, but, when it was possible, she avoided it.

There was no trial so great to her as that of going out with Lady Rooden and the Captain. The result was that she spent many lonely hours at home, and brooded over what seemed to her a terrible sorrow.

There came a day when she was especially distressed.

Her mother had kissed her with unusual affection on the previous night, for her heart relented and softened as she noticed how pale and miserable she had grown.

She had taken her in her arms and kissed her with some of the old affection, and then Angela had lain awake many hours, thinking how she could best please her mother without making any compromise with the Captain.

She resolved to go to Lady Rooden the first thing in the morning, to kiss her, to conciliate her, to try to renew the old confidential relationship between them, to promise her to be more patient with respect to Captain Wynyard.

Her mind was full of good resolutions; but, when she she went down to the breakfast-room, she found the Captain already there.

He made a long elaborate apology.

Business had brought him so near to Rood House that he could not resist calling in to beg a cup of coffee.

The fact was, he whispered to his *fiancee*, that he could not live out of her presence. Angela recoiled at the sight of him.

"Can I never have my mother one minute to myself," she thought bitterly. But her greeting of the Captain was kinder than usual, for she resolved to adhere to her good resolutions. "I can see mamma before she goes out after luncheon," she told herself; and she waited patiently.

But the Captain appeared again at luncheon, and this time with the excuse that he wanted to drive Lady Rooden to a *fete* at Kew.

Angela grew angrily impatient, then, but did her best to control her feelings.

She went to her mother's room when her ladyship retired.

"Mamma," she said eagerly, "I want to speak to you. Can you spare a few minutes?"

"Not just now, Angel; I must not keep the Captain waiting. Gentlemen can never bear that. I was always most punctual with your dear father." She did not notice the angry flush on her daughter's face as she uttered the words, but went on, with the utmost complacency, "I shall make it a rule all through my married life never to keep the Captain waiting; nothing destroys a man's temper so soon. I said I would be ready in ten minutes, and the Captain will expect me."

"Already he is first with her!" Angela thought bitterly. "She has no time for me."

"You want to see me about your dress for the wedding, I suppose? Well, to-morrow will do."

"Perfectly well, mamma," she answered, with bitterness of heart—"Indeed I am sorry to trouble you at all."

"You are very good, Angel. My mind is much occupied just now. Captain Wynyard is a man of such exquisite and refined taste, you have no idea how difficult I find it to please him in matters of dress. I assure you I feel quite nervous at times when I am going out with him."

And the beautiful woman looked so wistfully in the glass that Angela's anger all melted, and she threw her arms round her mother's neck, kissing her as she had not done for some time.

"You need never be nervous, mamma," she assured her; "you always look beautiful."

And Lady Rooden was well pleased with her daughter's assurance.

"Now I must go," she said; "there remains but one minute out of ten. You like this combination of cream and amber?"

"It is charming, mamma," Angela replied.

"You are quite sure," Lady Rooden asked, "that my gloves match exactly? I am anxious about the shade; it should be exact."

"It is, mamma," the girl said, with a sigh.

Angela could not help the feeling that in some strange way she and her mother had changed places—that she was older in heart and mind than this charming woman whom love seemed to have made young again.

"Good-bye, mamma," said Angela, as her mother quickly left the room; and her ladyship had hardly time to return the hurried farewell.

"I will not be discouraged," Angela thought. "I must be patient. I must learn to be less exacting, and bear with other people's claims on my mother. I shall be sure to see her this evening. After taking breakfast and luncheon here, Captain Wynyard cannot surely return to dinner."

But, to her chagrin and dismay, he did. Lady Rooden had invited a few friends to meet him, and had said nothing to her daughter about it—she had in all probability forgotten it.

Still, notwithstanding this great provocation to open rebellion, Angela curbed her anger.

And Lady Rooden returned only just in time for dinner.

"I am vexed at being so late," she said, "for I shall look flushed and disturbed all the evening."

To Angela it seemed that her mother had never given so much attention to her personal appearance as she gave now—indeed her whole time seemed to be spent over her toilet and in the company of the Captain.

The dinner was a success, as every dinner given at Rood House was, and the evening passed away quickly and pleasantly to all except Angela.

"Now at least I shall have my mother to myself," she thought, as the last of the guests, as she fancied, disappeared. But, when she returned to the drawing-room, the Captain was standing by her mother's side, evidently delaying his departure as long as he could.

Lady Rooden smiled brightly at her daughter as she entered.

"Bid the Captain good night, Angela; and if you want me, I will see you presently up-stairs."

"Good night, Miss Rooden," said Captain Wynyard. He noticed the pained, mortified expression of the girl's face, and it filled his heart with a malicious delight. "She will learn her lesson soon," he said to himself, "and with it she will learn to show me respect."

"Good night, Captain Wynyard," returned Angela, with a stately bow and a flash of anger from her eyes.

She went to her mother's room, her heart full of bitterness, her patience entirely exhausted.

Wringing her hands, she walked up and down the luxurious chamber, her heart torn with pain and anger.

"She was all mine once! I could see her when I wished, I was welcome at all hours and at all seasons; now I always intrude, and there is never time to see me. Oh, mother," she cried aloud, in her passionate jealousy, "you are almost dead to me!"

Then it occurred to her that, if she found the Captain's frequent presence so unbearable now, what should she do when he lived with them always at the Abbey?

Here there was some little respite, at the Abbey there would be none.

There would be no avoiding him there; he would be master of the house.

He could go where he liked, do as he liked; he would be lord paramount everywhere.

It would no longer be home, as she had known it in the past.

Just at that moment Lady Rooden entered the room, and threw herself lazily into an easy-chair.

"Oh, Angel," she cried, "I am so tired I do not think I can keep my eyes open many minutes longer. I have been so happy to-night; but even excessive happiness tires one. Do you want to speak to me very particularly?"

"Not if you are too fatigued, mamma. Do you think that ever again you will be able to find ten minutes for me?"

"I hope so, Angel. I must confess that the Captain engrosses the greater part of my time now; but, Angla, I would give him every moment of my life if I could."

"You love him so dearly, mamma?"—so dearly, Angel."

The girl kissed the radiant face and bade her mother good night.

There was no time for her now, she told herself; and, with this thought gnawing at her heart, she wept herself to sleep.

Lady Rooden, dreaming of the handsome face and caressing words of the man she loved, slept on serenly indifferent to her daughter's pain.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE DUK-DUK.—King Dick is chief of the Duk-duk, in Duke of York Island, in the South Pacific Ocean, from which he gains much of his power," says the author of 'Wanderings in a Wild Country.' "There are many other minor chiefs in Duke of York, but they are in reality subject to the greater ones.

"On the death of one of the chiefs the eldest nephew on the sister's side always succeeds his uncle. So should the eldest sister not have any children, the eldest son of the second sister succeeds, and so on.

"Should there be no descendant at all, the people of that district elect a new chief, generally choosing an individual for his wealth, as that constitutes the sinews of war, and they choose the one who can pay them best for fighting.

"The Duk-duk, of which Tor Paulo is chief, may be spoken of as the administration of law, being judge, policeman and hangman all in one, as he settles all disputes and punishes all offenders.

"This mysterious power is in reality one man appointed by the chief, and who is dressed in leaves which cover his body to below the waist; he wears a large helmet, coming completely over the face and resting on the shoulders, in shape like an extinguisher.

"This is made of net-work, so that he can both breathe and see without being seen; it is painted to represent a hideous face. This strange figure travels through the bush, visiting each village, and if any man has received wrong at the hands of his neighbors he pays the Duk-duk so much dewarra to settle the question.

"This functionary then goes off to the aggressor's house and demands restitution of the stolen goods, or payment for the harm done, which if the person accused does not pay or restore at once, the Duk-duk sets fire to his house, or, in some extreme cases, spears the offender. Women and children are not allowed to look at the Duk-duk, or they will die. This superstition is so strong amongst them that they will run away and hide themselves as soon as they hear him coming, which they know by a peculiar shrieking noise he makes as he goes along.

"When the young men are old enough they are admitted into the secret, on payment of about one hundred fathoms of dewarra, which if they cannot pay they must always keep out of the way. At stated periods the Duk-duk goes his rounds, and afterwards there is a big feast and a dance, at which all the initiated attend; and there is much dancing and dressing up in flowers and fern leaves on the occasion.

"There is sometimes more than one Duk-duk, if the chief can afford it; no man is allowed to lift his hand against him, but must submit to everything the Duk-duk does; if not, his life is not worth a day's purchase, as the chief of that Duk-duk's district will find a method of putting the offender quietly out of the way.

"The secrets of the Duk-duk are not allowed to be spoken of outside the 'taboo-ground,' where he is supposed to live; and no one who is not initiated is allowed on that ground under the penalty of a heavy fine, or, if this be not paid, of death.

"A case occurred at Rukukuroo where a young man was driven, by stress of weather, in his canoe on to the taboo-ground, and it happened that the Duk-duk was holding, or just about to hold, a feast. The young man seized and carried to the Duk-duk, who tomahawked him on the spot, and served his body as part of the feast in course of preparation.

"Of course, no one outside the Duk-duk society ever knew what had become of the poor fellow.

"The Duk-duk is both a curse and a blessing to his people; he certainly keeps order and makes the native afraid to commit any flagrant act of felony, but at the same time it encourages cannibalism and terrorism."

Scientific and Useful.

HICCOUGH.—A prominent medical writer says that refrigeration of the lobe of the ear will stop hiccough, wherever its cause may be. Very slight refrigeration, such as a drop of cold hydrant water, is said to be sufficient.

TO CURL FEATHERS.—The ribs are scraped with a bit of glass, cut circularly, in order to render them pliant; and then by drawing the edge of a blunt knife over the filaments, they assume the curly form so much admired.

PERPETUAL INK.—Pitch, three pounds; melt over the fire, then add lamp-black, one pound; mix well. This is used in a melted state to fill the letters on tombstones, marbles, etc. Without actual violence, it will endure as long as the stone itself.

RUST PREVENTIVE.—To preserve bright grates or fireirons from rust, make a strong paste of fresh lime and water, and with a fine brush smear it as thickly as possible all over the polished surface requiring preservation. By this simple means all the grates and fireirons in an empty house may be kept for months free from harm without further care or attention.

TRAPPING.—A Maryland sportsman is having manufactured a complete suit of rubber clothing by means of which he expects to slaughter numberless wild geese. The head piece, which will be the only part kept in view, is to be made exactly in the form of a wild goose sitting upon the water and furnished with magnifying glass eyes through which the wearer can see his way among the game.

COFFEE MACHINE.—An odd coffee machine has been patented in London. A lamp beneath boils the water for infusion and at the same time roasts the berries, which, as roasted, are automatically emptied into a hopper and ground by a mill attached. Thus the whole process of roasting the green coffee berries, grinding and infusing the same is simultaneously performed within about fifteen minutes.

IN SURGERY.—A well-known Parisian instrument maker, has opened up a fertile field of invention by applying electricity to surgical requirements. His polyscope for lighting up inaccessible cavities of the body by means of a small platinum spiral rendered incandescent by the electric current, has been generally adopted by scientific dentists; and his new electric probe is likely to be useful also. It consists of two metal stems placed side by side, but separated by an insulator, and terminated by two very fine sharp points. Conducting wires are connected to the butt-ends of these two blades, and include in their circuit a small inverting battery and a tiny trembler bell. When the probe comes in contact with a metallic body in the wound, say a ball or spark of metal, the circuit is completed across its points and the bell is rung, thereby announcing contact to the operator.

Farm and Garden.

FOWLS.—An open shed will be prefered by poultry in preference to a closed house, even in severe weather. Fowls are partial to fresh air, but require shelter from rains and cold winds.

TREES.—If trees are growing too vigorously, and are sending out too many or too long branches, lop them off now. If cleanly done no harm will follow. But cut smoothly; don't tear or twist them off.

DRAINAGE.—The fall is an excellent time for draining the land, and the best method of so doing is by the use of drain tile. But few farmers use the tile large enough for thorough drainage. It is cheaper and better in the end to have the tile too large rather than too small in diameter.

HORSES.—Many horses have the habit of sleeping standing up. It is a very injurious habit and the horse should be broken of it if possible. The narrow stalls in which horses are often placed make a recumbent position very difficult. It is cruelty to the animal to place him in such a stall after doing a hard day's work.

CORN AND POTATOES.—Level cultivation of both corn and potatoes is growing in favor every year. One of the advantages of this method is a saving of labor, another being crops in such fields suffer less from drought than in those where the earth is drawn from the middle of the rows and left in hills or ridges around the growing vegetation.

TOADS AND INSECTS.—A toad put into a hot bed makes one of the best protectors against insects. They are valuable, also, in the garden. Not only do they subsist upon insects but they destroy those which the birds cannot reach—those which depredate at night when the birds are asleep. In England the farmers and gardeners purchase them at 4 pence apiece.

OVER NIGHT.—Plows that stand over night in the field will rust. If they cannot be carried to the barn draw them out of the ground and leave them standing. If a plow is laid on its side the beam is liable to become warped. When the season is over, and the tools are no longer required, they should be painted and stored away.

IN BULK.—The more of the produce of our farms that is reduced to a concentrated form, instead of being shipped or sold in its bulky or crude state, the greater the opportunities for profit. Grass, corn, rye and oats, fed in connection with turnips, beets, carrots, etc., should be converted into butter, cheese or meat, which not only permits of better prices, but leaves the manure for the land.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

PHILADELPHIA, OCTOBER 10, 1885.

Purity, Progress, Pleasure and Permanence are conspicuously ineffaceable features written by the finger of Time on the venerable record of this paper. To the thousands who have drawn many of their noblest thoughts and much of their sweetest enjoyment from its familiar columns, in the two generations covering its history, renewed assurances of devotion to their gratification and improvement are superfluous. THE SATURDAY EVENING POST exists solely to serve the best interests and promote the truest pleasures of its patrons and readers. It hopes to constantly deserve the unswerving approval of its great army of old and new friends. It aspires to no higher ambition. To accomplish this, nothing shall impede the way. The best productions of the noblest thinkers and the finest writers will fill its columns, and the unwearied energies of the most careful editors shall be continuously devoted to its preparation. Nothing impure or debasing will be permitted to defile its pages nor make them an unworthy visitor to any home. The most Graphic Narrations, Instructive Sketches, Fascinating Stories, Important Biographical Essays, Striking Events, Best Historical Descriptions, Latest Scientific Discoveries, and other attractive features adapted to every portion of the family circle, will appear from week to week, while the Domestic, Social, Fashion and Correspondence Departments will be maintained at the highest possible standard of excellence. Its sole aim is to furnish its subscribers with an economical and never-failing supply of happiness and instruction, which shall be as necessary to their existence as the air they breathe. While myriads of silken threads in the web of memory stretch far back in the history of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, it will never rest on past laurels, but keep fully abreast of all genuine progress in the spirit of the age in which the present generation lives. It earnestly seeks and highly appreciates the favor and friendship of the pure and good everywhere, but desires no affiliation with, nor characteristic approval from, their opposites.

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The Pride of Ignorance.

We often hear a great deal about the pride of knowledge or the pride of intellect; and perhaps knowledge and intellect sometimes are proud, though to be sure those who have mixed most with the really greatest and wisest men generally find them marked instead by profound modesty, deep humility, and extreme caution in the expression of opinion.

But people do not usually lay enough stress upon that opposite and singularly topsy-turvy form of pride—the pride of ignorance, which nevertheless does really exist and flourish amongst us in a very high degree of development and perfection. Nothing is commoner than to hear the hard-headed, practical man plume himself openly upon his own undisguised want of knowledge. "Scientific people will tell you so and so," he says, patronizingly, with a little deprecatory wave of his hand, like Mr. Podsnap: "I dare say they're quite right. They may be; I know nothing about it. But, for my part, I'm not in the least scientific. I don't pretend to know anything at all upon the subject."

And then he stands with his back to the fire, and assumes a profound air of moral virtue, as though there were really something very fine and noble in his determination to know absolutely nothing about the matter in question. He is every bit as proud of his ignorance as the wisest man is proud of his knowledge. Every bit as proud, do we say? If the truth be told, ten thousand times prouder; for true greatness is always unassuming.

But why are people proud of their ignorance? What good thing can there possibly be in the want of knowledge that any human being could ever be proud of? At first sight it is hard, indeed, to see the explanation; but perhaps it lies in two deep-seated and fundamental principles of human nature. In the first place, people are almost always, in their hearts, proud of themselves from top to bottom. They are proud of their very weaknesses and failings.

The ugly man is proud that he is not one of those conceited jackanapes that strut about the streets and exhibit their fine teeth whenever they speak, with their inane smile and grinning stupidity. The miser is proud that he is not a wretched fool of a spendthrift; the spendthrift is proud that he is not a wretched old curmudgeon of a miser. The drunkard prides himself in not being a nasty straight-laced teetotaler; the libertine prides himself on not being one of those ugly, sour-faced, oily hypocrites who look as if they had swallowed a poker in their youth and never digested it. So, it is probable, the ignorant man prides himself on not being a dry stick of a pedant—on knowing the world, and men, and things, not mere dull and empty useless book-knowledge—on rising superior to those poor fools of scientific men who think they are so prodigiously well up in everything because they know a little of mathematics or a trifle of chemistry.

Human vanity is so inexplicably deep that it will find out a virtue in every form of vice and every kind of deficiency, provided only they are its own personal ones. But pride of ignorance, when it takes its last offensive form, is, in all probability, hopelessly incurable.

The man who can fortify his own errors or mistakes by propping them up on the authority of a Divine message, is rarely to be dislodged from the strange position he arrogates to himself in his ignorant complacency. And yet it is curious that at some time or other hardly a single great accepted truth has not so been opposed by dogmatic ignorance, hardly a single superstitious belief has not so been bolstered up by Scriptural warrant, hardly a single gross injustice has not so been justified by the misapplied text of some prophet or apostle. The law of gravitation was objected to on the ground that it seemed to substitute a secondary cause for the immediate act and will of the Creator.

Later still, first geology, and then evolution, have been similarly decried as opposed to the plain doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. The good and learned Sir Matthew Hale firmly held that, if you did not burn unhappy old women at the stake as witches—for no other crime than because they were bent and very ugly—you were disregarding the plain injunctions of the divinely-inspired author.

Thousands of excellent people among ourselves were equally certain a generation ago that to grant civil rights to the Jews was to cast a terrible slight upon the Christian religion. A few centuries ago, in the reign of the English King John, it was no doubt regarded as a pious work to extract the teeth of Hebrews by slow degrees; and a man who should have objected to the popular method of converting them in the mass by burning down their houses and ill-treating their wives and daughters, would probably have brought down upon himself universal condemnation as a very lukewarm, half-hearted Christian.

These curious aberrations of the human intellect, and these strange freaks of personal interpretation, ought to make us all very careful how we prop up our own ignorant opinions or prejudices by the weight of an infallible Divine authority as expounded by our own very fallible fancy.

ILL-HEALTH does not always imply sin, nor good health always involve merit. Various causes may produce both, over which we have personally no control. A good constitution and favorable circumstances may have combined to establish vigorous health, while reverse conditions may have resulted in sickness and suffering. This is, however, equally true of moral qualities. Some are born with good tendencies, others with evil; some are surrounded with everything propitious to their improvement, others with everything to lead them astray. But in both cases duty enters in the shape of individual effort to restrain what is evil, and enhance what is good, the difference being that in the one case we admit and emphasize it, while in the other we slight or ignore it. We thus allow ourselves to imagine that some duties are not so very binding, and some sins are not so very sinful. Let us disabuse our minds of all such sophistry, and place the cultivation of fine physical health among our plainest and clearest duties, shunning as a positive sin every known breach of the laws of our physical life.

REASON and Faith are twin-born—the one in form and features the image of manly beauty; the other of feminine grace and gentleness, but to each of them is allotted a sad privation. The bright eyes of Reason are full of piercing intelligence, but his ear is closed to sound. Faith has an ear of exquisite delicacy; but on her sightless eyeballs, as she lifts them towards heaven, the sunbeam plays in vain. Hand in hand the brother and sister, in all mutual love, pursue their way through a world on which, like ours, day breaks and night falls alternate. By day the eyes of Reason are the guide of Faith, and by night the ear of Faith is the guide of Reason. As is usual with those who labor under these privations respectively, Reason is apt to be eager, impetuous, impatient of that instruction which his infirmity will not permit him readily to apprehend; while Faith, gentle and docile, is ever willing to listen to the voice by which alone truth and wisdom effectually can reach her.

GOOD nature has its lights and shades, and we need to recognize them both. Easy, amiable people do not always do their full share towards the world's progress. They oil the wheels of life, it is true, and thus, by preventing friction, make it easier; but they do not always supply the force needed to move it. Good nature needs for its true balance a strong and firm sense of justice. If that be present and active, there is no danger of our kindliness going to an extreme. But where it is absent, or at least imperfectly developed, the good-natured person may easily fall into a habit of indiscriminate patience and forbearance, of easy approval and of condoning what is wrong, that is quite as self-indulgent as it is indulgent to others.

No one who has looked into life with honest eyes can have failed to discover that it derives untold values from the love which welcomes its dawn, attends its growth, and advances step by step and soothes and cheers its old age. Human love is itself a pearl of great price. How it enlarges, enriches, and ennobles life! What beneficent ministries it conducts!—what patient heroism and severe self-suppression it inspires! In a mother it is faith, hope, patience, effort and victory. In young hearts it is a transforming gladness, an awakening to the responsibility and to the rapture of life. In manhood and womanhood it is the balm of care, a refuge in temptation and a source of serenity.

IT is ungenerous to withhold an expression of sympathy for those who have failed in the accomplishment of great undertakings in which they have embarked all their pecuniary, physical, and intellectual resources. As a general rule, people are hardly considerate enough toward the unsuccessful. There is too great a disposition to forget their pluck and perseverance, and sneer at their trustfulness. We ought to bear in mind that it is this sublime audacity of faith to which we are indebted for the marvelous achievements of our age.

How to be cheerful—that is, how to be content in existing circumstances—is the problem which one must solve for himself. It may seem a hard task; and certainly no mere act of volition, and no direct effort can accomplish it. We cannot change our low spirit into higher, or our mournful feelings into cheery ones, by simply determining to do so; but we can apply our force to bear upon the conditions on which they rest, we can put to flight many causes of dejection, and nourish many germs of serenity and comfort.

MORAL beauty cannot co-exist with radical defects of principle. The character that is unable to resist temptation, or unwilling to cling faithfully to duty, is no more truly beautiful, whatever be its generous impulses or amiable traits, than a figure which cannot support its own weight. Parts of it may be admirable, but, as a whole, as a unity, it cannot be rightly called a beautiful character, for it lacks the foundation.

The World's Happenings.

A novel by Queen Victoria actually is talked of.

It is proposed in Georgia to tax the base-ball players.

Chicago is Indian for skunk—meaning also strong, great.

A kiss was the means of taking the dreaded smallpox into Boston.

"Mother Hubbardville" is the name of a Georgia railroad station.

"Sin Was In," a sign on the door of a Chinese shop at Socorro, N. M.

Horses, beware! "This is a wire fence," is a sign near San Andreas, Cal.

Watering milk in Florida is punishable by imprisonment for ten years.

A book, whitewashing graceless King Herod, is a new thing between covers.

A swarm of bees recently settled on a man's head in Regent street, London.

"Pick more cotton, and play less baseball," is the Mississippi motto of the hour.

The Brazilian army comprises 80 generals, 7,436 officers, and 13,300 private soldiers.

A tornado in Dakota was photographed, and it bore a very close resemblance to a waterspout.

For a wager of two dollars, a resident of Danbury, Conn., swallowed a small live frog the other day.

In Wyoming Territory they tell of a "glee club" that has gleefully hanged six men since 1885 came in.

Two canaries began to sing when their cage was struck by lightning, at St. Charles, Mo., a few days ago.

A man at Millbank, Colorado, has a chicken with a head at each end, one white and the other black, but no tail.

The new Gallic dandy is called the "mower," because he habitually swings his cane like a scythe as he walks along.

The $10,000,000 of silver coin put on board a man-of-war, at New Orleans, carried the ship down two and one-half feet.

The classic Tiber is once more to become a commercial highway, a line of steamers having been built to run between Rome and Genoa.

The largest ocean steamers burn, on an average, about 450 tons of coal a day. From twelve to fifteen men are employed as stokers.

German soldiers are expected to write home at least once a month. All letters to and from the soldiers pass free through the mails.

The Chinese have invaded another industry at San Francisco. There are now three printing offices in that city which are owned by Chinese.

The Supreme Court of British Columbia is the only place in America where the judges and lawyers wear the wigs and gowns of English usage.

A man in the west swallowed a five-dollar gold piece, and a local paper reports that about $4.50 had been recovered with a stomach-pump at last accounts.

"It is unseasonable and unwholesome in all months that have not an R in their names, to eat an oyster." Thus wrote Butler, in his "Dyet's Dry Dinner," as long ago as 1599.

"Now, who will give us a horse?" writes the editor of a Florida paper, in an eloquent leader, acknowledging the receipt from a few admiring friends of a cow and a calf.

The Providence, R. I., authorities have decided to license only two skating-rinks in that city this season, and to charge each $2 daily for license, subject to revocation at any time.

There is such a glut of fruit in California that hundreds of tons of plums and other varieties will be allowed to rot on the trees this season. The price will not pay for the picking.

The gamblers of Omaha have made a proposition to the city that if they are not interfered with for one year they will pay for all street improvements and keep up the water works.

Officers of the Chilian navy talk a great deal about the anticipated time when they may sack San Francisco, and their idea is said seriously to be that a project of that kind is quite feasible.

Hogs' blood is said to be now manufactured into buttons and similar articles, and the hard shell that covers the cartilage of the foot is now sold by parties who manufacture springs for railroad cars.

A hair-splitting religious publication has omitted one of its August issues on the ground that there are fifty-three Thursdays in 1885, and it only contracted with its subscribers to give them fifty-two papers.

A citizen of Cobb county, Ga., had a case in Cobb Superior Court that involved $20,000, yet on the jury trying the case were eight men who could not sign their names or make a calculation in interest.

A Mississippi negro woman had so much confidence in her husband as a marksman, that she held up an apple for him to shoot at with a shot-gun. The coroner hadn't as much confidence, and sent the shooter to jail.

To drink lemonade scientifically, use two straws, side by side, and keep one about an eighth of an inch in advance of the other. It will thus draw up the loose particles of pulp, while the other will remain unclogged.

A Rahway, N. J., doctor died the other day from what was believed to have been, and had been diagnosed by the doctor himself as a case of bad liver, but the post-mortem examination disclosed that death had been caused by consumption.

G. L. Thomas, of Albany, N. Y., is said to own the largest mastiff in the world. His name is Senator, his age is thirteen months; weight, 180 pounds, height 35 1-2 inches over the withers; length from tip of nose to end of tail, 7 feet 8 inches. He is valued at $1,000.

PARADISE.

BY W. D. S.

O Paradise must fairer be
  Than all on earth excelling:
O would that I, from trouble free,
  Where there securely dwelling!
In Paradise a river clear
  Of heavenly love is streaming,
Where every bitter earthly tear
  A lucid pearl is gleaming.

In Paradise soft breezes blow
  To cool the heart's hot fever;
The pangs and pains that here we know
  They waft away for ever.
In Paradise, on greenest glade,
  The tree of Peace is planted:
The sleeper underneath its shade
  By blissful dreams is haunted.

A cherub sentry at the gate
  His wakeful watch is keeping,
Lest worldly din should penetrate
  To rouse me, sweetly sleeping.
My heart, that shattered bark, will there
  Be safe in harbor riding:
Its ever restless infant, Care,
  Be lulled to rest abiding.

For every thorn that gave a wound,
  A rose will there be borne me;
And joy, that here no roses found,
  With rosy wreaths adorn me.
There will all pleasures breathe and bloom,
  That here untimely withered,
And blossoms all of rich perfume
  From arid stems be gathered.

All that was here my heart's pursuit,
  Will grow from hour to hour,
From tender frond as golden fruit,
  As summer's opening flower.
The blighted hopes that here were mine,
  Like wreaths from many a far land,
In fragrant bloom will round me twine,
  My never fading garland.

Youth, that on rapid beating wing
  So swiftly o'er me darted,
And Love, that on a morn in spring
  One nectar draught imparted.
Wingless and flightless there will be,
  And to their heart will hold me,
And, like a child on mother's knee,
  In soft embraces fold me.

And that Divinity, whose light
  Shone dim and fitful gleaming,
Whose lovely visage angel bright
  I only saw in dreaming,
Fair Poesy unveiled will show
  Her eyes' celestial fires.
While joyously my song shall flow
  To sound of angel lyres.

The Contrasts.

BY HENRY FRITH.

"SHE'S a dear little girl," said Mark Somer's,—"practical and full of common sense, and will make some man a good, true wife. She'll keep his house properly, nurse and care for him and his children tenderly and faithfully; but as for sympathizing with his higher intellectual needs, of that she is incapable. She's like hosts of others—pretty, and gentle, and loving, but commonplace."

"Such women wear well," replied his friend, John Hilton; "and usually bloom into hopeful and contented wives and mothers. They seem meant for every-day use and living, and not for show or ornament."

"Shall I introduce you?" And Mark smiled mischievously. "Kathie and I are the best of friends, but not lovers in any sense of the word. She'd be even more loth to take me for a husband than I her for a wife."

He tried to believe what he said; but his conscience gave him not a little twinge when he remembered certain shy looks and blushes of hers.

John Hilton glanced at a little figure in white on the opposite side of the room, and, to his friend's surprise, nodded assent.

"I should be glad to know her," he said, simply.

It was a very select company assembled in Mrs. Vane's sitting-room, and Kathie Lynn did look a little plain and insignificant when contrasted with some of the fashionable beauties around her; for Kathie was one better fitted to shine at home than in society; it was the first large party she had ever attended.

She was a fair, sweet, wholesome-looking girl, with sunny hair and blue eyes, but hardly appeared at her best that night, owing to shyness and embarrassment.

Mark Somers was her brother's dearest friend, and she had thus come to know him intimately. He had found her fresh, guileless nature and womanly ways specially attractive; and though she was quite different from the woman he meant to marry, a friendship had sprung up between the two that might easily have ripened into a warmer feeling.

That it was doing so half unconsciously, neither of them realized until that night; and Kathie even then caught but a faint glimpse of the truth by the pang she felt at Mark's neglect.

But as for him, he saw clearly that he was becoming seriously attached to this girl, and that he must break off the intimacy at once, or it would be too late, both for her peace and his own.

For he meant to be true and honorable; and though Kathie could not make him such a wife as he desired, her welfare lay near his heart.

John Hilton thought the eyes very sweet that were lifted up in acknowledgement of Mark's introduction, and was either so engrossed by them, or their owner's shy attempts at conversation, as to become oblivious of anything else the rest of the evening.

Mark watched him a little jealously at first, but was soon consoled by Mrs. Vane, who whispered in his ear, "Miss Reeves is in the library, and has expressed a wish to know you. Isn't that a compliment?"

He knew Miss Reeves by reputation as a brilliant society belle, who sang pathetic little songs of her own composition, wrote poetry occasionally for the magazines, and dabbled in art as well as music and literature.

She was beautiful, too; dark-haired and queenly-looking, with a great deal of dignity and self-possession.

Mark had admired her from a distance, and had begged Mrs. Vane for an introduction.

But that lady had been so taken up with her duties as hostess that she had not found time to grant his request until now.

Miss Reeves was sitting in a low chair under the gaslight, looking over some engravings, when they entered the library.

She raised her eyes slowly at their approach, as if unwilling to be interrrupted; but Mrs. Vane had no sooner mentioned Mr. Somer's name than she held out her hand with an enchanting smile.

"You are not quite such a stranger as you think," she said, archly. "I know you by reputation, if not by sight. Your little cousin Lucy was my especial *protege* at school, and used to tell wonderful tales of your achievements. Not that I believed them all,"—and she laughed softly; "but I confess to a little curiosity regarding her hero.

"Lucy was equally extravagant in her praises of you," he replied, with a mocking bow; or at least I thought so then, but am ready to acknowledge now that she did her subject no more than justice."

"A neatly-turned phrase," said Mrs. Vane mischievously. "After that, I can safely leave you to the tender mercies of Claudia."

And she was gone before either could remonstrate.

Miss Reeves flushed rosily, and began to talk of the engravings she had been examining.

From the discussion of art and pictures they wandered to that of books and music; an hour had flown by unheeded when their hostess again put her head inside the door.

"You two had better emerge from seclusion," she said, "or there'll be a paragraph, headed 'Mysterious Disappearance!' going the rounds of the newspapers. I'm besieged by hosts of anxious inquirers, and shall have to capitulate soon."

Mark laughed, but Miss Reeves bit her lip as if vexed.

A faint gleam of exultation lit up her face, though, when he whispered, softly, "Pardon me that I forgot everything else in listening to you. It is so seldom I meet one whose tastes and sympathies harmonize with my own."

"Or I, either," she returned, a little sadly. "Congeniality is rarely found in this world."

Mark felt his heart beat faster at these words.

The woman beside him was gifted, and beautiful, and greatly admired, and it gratified, his vanity to think he had impressed her favorably.

Nor was she wanting in lovable qualities. Her eyes could be dangerously soft and alluring at times, and she knew just when to droop them shyly, and how to modulate her voice and make it low and tender, and was trained in all the arts that fascinate men.

She'd tried these successively with Mark, and they had not failed of their due effect.

There was a brief pause; and then she said, gently, "If we stay here, there will be another invasion. Shall we join the others?"

He offered her his arm in silence, and they passed out into the hall.

Kathie Lynn, standing at the foot of the staircase with John Hilton, saw the two together, and turned to her companion with a tremulous smile.

"Who is that lovely dark-haired lady with Mark?" she asked, and tried to make her voice steady, but it quivered a little.

"Miss Reeves," he answered; "you must have heard of her. She is a thorough woman of the world, but has the art to hide it under a great deal of fine talk and affected sentiment. She has cultivated graces of mind rather than those of the heart, and the only crop brought forth by the latter is one of vanity and selfishness."

Kathie looked mystified, and was inclined to think Mr. Hilton judged the lady somewhat harshly.

But she did not care to pursue the topic further, or analyze the painful feeling at her heart.

She was a brave, modest girl, and when she understood that Mark had regarded her simply as a friend, she put aside whatever other thoughts she might have cherished, and would not acknowledge even to herself that they had ever existed.

Mrs. Vane's party was fruitful of results, for not only Miss Reeves, but Kathie herself, won a husband thereby.

John Hilton did not think the frank, true hearted girl, who welcomed him with such bright eyes, and was so practical and efficient in every relation of life, "commonplace;" or at least, if he did, he thanked Heaven that a few such commonplace women still existed to brighten and purify the lives of brothers, and fathers, and husbands.

And perhaps it was because he did not possess those "higher intellectual needs" spoken of by Mark Somers that he never missed her sympathy therewith, for whenever he talked, whether of fields, or flowers, or birds, or books, or business, he always found her a genial and appreciative listener.

It is true, they did not rail at the world and their fellow-beings as Mark and Miss Reeves were in the habit of doing, or enter into metaphysical discussions, or fancy that mortals had never before been created with such sensitive and finely attuned organizations as theirs.

But they were happy for all that, and John Hilton thought it a proud moment of his life when Kathie shyly owned her love, and confessed that he was dearer to her than "all the world beside."

Mark's wooing was somewhat different. For Claudia Reeves, with all her romance and sentiment, looked at love in a far more practical light than our little Kathie, and regarded rather the eligibility of the suitor than her own feelings.

Mark possessed a comfortable income, but was not rich, and this was the reason why she kept him vacillating so long between hope and fear, alternately inviting and repelling his advances.

But Claudia was nearly twenty-five, and was dependent upon an aunt whom she detested; and Mark was handsome, and had engaging manners, and so the scale finally turned in his favor.

The two weddings were as unlike as possible.

One was quiet and unpretending; the other, all show and glitter.

A year went by, and to each household came a little stranger.

Claudia had but a cold welcome ready.

"Children are such a nuisance!" she said to Mark. "Of course I shall feel for my own; but as to making such sacrifices for them as some mothers do, I never could!"

Kathie caressed the babe on her arm with a glad smile, and said, softly:

"The wee darling! God make me worthy of His gift!"

But Kathie was only a simple-hearted, loving little woman, and had no such aspirations as Claudia—no such "yearnings after the unattainable.

The two families were on visiting terms, and Mark Somers, loyal husband as he strove to be, could not help contrasting Kathie's cheerful content with his wife's ill-humor and dissatisfaction.

For when it was long too late Claudia began to think her marriage a fatal mistake, and that she might have done better if she had waited longer.

She was not wise enough to keep her disappointment to herself, but to let it be seen in numberless ways.

"You had no right to marry on such a beggarly income," she said, when Mark reproached her for some extravagance. "Of all evils, poverty is the worst."

"My circumstances were known to you," he replied, with dignity; but an angry flush dyed his cheek. "Pardon me, though, if I think the word beggarly hardly applicable to an income of a thousand pounds a year. John Hilton has but little over half of that, and yet they manage to live—and, so far as I see, as comfortably, or more so, than we do."

"Oh, Mrs. Hilton is a famous housekeeper, and I have no talent for anything like that. She's completely wrapped up in her husband and baby, and very seldom goes into society. I could not lead such a life of stagnation!"

"But home duties ought to claim a share of your attention, Claudia. I'm a little tired of balls, and parties, and the opera, and this constant gaiety and excitement. The cost of it, too, is more than we can afford."

"We may as well understand each other first, as last," she answered, coldly. "I was never meant for a household drudge, and don't intend to sink into one. Because you are growing humdrum and commonplace, it is no reason why I should."

"Certainly not," and he smiled sarcastically. "Sacrifice what you will to society, I cannot prevent it; but upon one thing I insist, that you do not run into debt any more."

"I hate economy, and to be always thinking of ways and means," she answered. "You ought to have married a woman like Mrs. Hilton. She's just petty minded enough to delight in such things."

Mark Somers looked at his wife a little critically.

She had on a soiled wrapper—her hair was uncombed—her whole appearance slovenly in the extreme.

She kept her fine raiment, as she did her wit and grace and conversational talents, for the world, and thought it would be a waste of materials to use them at home.

And this was the woman whose delicate sensibilities he had rated so high above Kathie's.

He could not help thinking of it now, and recalling a picture he had seen that morning on his way to the office—Mrs. Hilton romping with her baby, her cheeks all bloom, her eyes brimming over with laughter, and as daintily dressed as if for a party.

Claudia would have sneered at the ruffled white apron and blue-sprigged calico, but Mark thought it the prettiest costume he had ever seen.

John Hilton was very proud of his wife, and home and baby.

He felt a sort of a pity for Mark, who had chosen so unwisely, and frequently invited the latter to his house.

Kathie was a genial little hostess, and Mark, to his surprise, found her well informed on the topics of the day.

It is true she could neither sing, nor write nor paint, like Claudia; but marriage had encircled and amplified her nature, and given her a deeper insight into the world of thought and feeling.

Mark remembered that he had once called her commonplace, and somehow the word began to have a new meaning for him thenceforward.

"How happy you two are!" he said to John one night, with a sigh—Kathie had gone upstairs to put her little one to bed, a task she seldom entrusted to the nurse. "Such perfect harmony is rarely seen.

"It is all Kathie's doing," answered John; for she knows just when and where to oil the domestic wheels so that they never jar or creak. A woman's tact is something wonderful."

"Then you never disagree—never have so much as the ghost of a quarrel?"

And Mark looked at his friend curiously.

His tone was a jesting one, but not so the feeling that prompted this inquiry.

"We are no more than human," John answered, smiling, "and of course do not think exactly alike on every point. I respect Kathie the more that she has a certain individuality of her own, and does not reflect all my likes and dislikes, my preferences and prejudices. Her opinion is often a safe and corrective of mine."

"But if her views of life were shallow and heartless, and she persisted in following a course you disapproved, what would you do then?" Mark asked, bitterly.

John hesitated before replying.

He more than half suspected that Mark referred to Claudia, and had a dislike of anything that seemed like interference between man and wife.

"I should reason with her," he said, finally,—"try to make her understand the wrong she was doing us both. If that failed—if nothing I said affected her—I could only make the best out of what happiness was left me, remembering that I had chosen with my eyes wide open, and that it was my own fault if I had mistaken her character."

Mark winced a little at this plain speaking, and instead of pursuing the topic, said, abruptly. "There is one other question I should like to ask you, and I hope you won't think it impertinent. How is it that you live so comfortably on your small salary?"

John opened his eyes very wide, and so did Kathie, who just then entered the room.

"Small!" echoed she, in amazement. "Why, it is six hundred a year, and we used to lay aside one-third of it before baby came!"

"Yet there are those who think a thousand a little better than begging," said Mark. "Pray let me into the secret of your management, Mrs. Hilton. I see no evidences of poverty here."

And he glanced around the little sitting-room admiringly, with his tasteful furnishing and cosy air of comfort.

Cheap and tawdry were the terms that Claudia would have applied to it, contrasting it with the artistic elegance of her own rooms; but Mark remembered their desolateness, and the dust that lay thick in corners, and thought this one far more cheerful and pleasant.

Kathie laughed gleefully.

"If you only knew what a time I had hunting for bargains when we started housekeeping," she said, "and in what a constant state of surprise I kept John! There was sure to be something new every night, and he finally began to look around for the last wonderful purchase as soon as he came home. Every article in this room has a history, more or less romantic."

"Kathie was very fortunate in her raid upon furniture-dealers and carpet warehouses," said John, with a look towards her half tender, half mischievous. "She is a wise little housekeeper too, and knows how to husband her resources."

Kathie's cheek flushed, for John's approval was as dear to her now as when they were first married.

Something in Mark's face, though, made her think of Claudia, and she turned the conversation to other topics.

Mark found his wife at home when he returned that night.

But her manner towards him was indifferent as usual, and instead of inquiring after his welfare or that of their child, she began at once to talk of her social triumphs.

"There were several famous people at Mrs. R——'s," she said, "men and women both, but I held my own among them, and was as much admired as anyone. A musician from London was enchanted with that little song of mine, 'The Stricken Heart,' and asked me if I wouldn't have it published. Then we had private theatricals one night, and I wrote a drama, and acted the principal part myself, and created such a sensation that all the other women were jealous. Mrs. R——declared that we ought to live in the town, where my talents would be appreciated, and that it was a shame to bury myself up in this country-place."

"You are greatly to be commiserated," said Mark, sarcastically, "especially as the 'place' has only fifty thousand inhabitants, and you seclude yourself so closely at home."

"It is a trial to be cramped as I am," she continued, without noticing his interruption, "and I wish you had a little more energy and ambition. There is no reason why you should not make money as well as other men, and perhaps you might in a wider sphere of action like London. Then, as Mrs. R—— says, one ought to think of the social advantages and opportunities for culture to be found there. The fact is," and she looked at him critically, "we are both deteriorating here—you even more than I."

Mark had indeed grown somewhat careless of his appearance, and was looking worn, and altogether presented quite a contrast to the man she married.

That the change was her work she never suspected, but ascribed it rather to his low tastes and pursuits.

For it was herself and not him, that she considered the victim of their ill-assorted union.

"Claudia," said Mark, kindly, controlling his indignation, "I should like an honest

talk with you. No woman has a right to ignore the claims of husband and child, and give the best of herself to the world. Yet that is what you do. Even if, as you hint, I have fallen below your expectations, the bond that unites us ought to be respected. Believe me, these dissensions that embitter our lives, are worse than useless. Let us avoid them for the future, and try to conform ourselves one to the other, both for our own sakes and that of our child."

"You are really eloquent," said Claudia, with a sneer; "but for my part, I hate pretence, and why should we simulate an attachment we don't feel? Our marriage was a mistake, for no two persons were ever more uncongenial than you and I."

"Yet you thought different once, or at least said so."

"I was deceived," she answered, coldly. "You appeared to have intellectual aspirations then, and a taste for music, and pictures, and society, and beautiful surroundings, and were as unlike as possible to what you are now."

"Not so," he replied; "I have not changed in any respect. I enjoy books, and pictures, and music, and entertaining conversation, and beautiful surroundings as well now as ever, but do not think them the only things worth living for, to which everything else ought to be sacrificed."

Claudia yawned, sleepily.

"We shall never agree," she said, "if we talk all night. The best way is to interfere with each other as little as possible. You ought not to complain, certainly. It is the wife rather than the husband that suffers most from an unequal marriage."

Mark left the room in silence.

He had done what he could, but in vain; his home could never be more to him than it was now.

There were not even any capabilities in Claudia for better things; she was utterly false, and shallow, and selfish.

Yet, having chosen, he manfully resolved to make the best of it, and not shirk the responsibility of his own act.

He had been attracted by show rather than solid worth, had cast aside gold for its base imitation; but the fault was his, and he must pay the penalty.

Now, when it was too late, he realized his mistake; and remembering Kattie, and all she was to her husband, the word "commonplace" had for him thenceforward a new, and sweet, and tender signification.

The Secret Staircase.

BY JAMES E. MEARS.

MERVYN TOWERS, the country seat of my uncle, Sir Marmaduke Mervyn, is situated among the northern hills of Northumberland, and although in the winter time the place is very wild and dismal, still the thought of being comfortably ensconced before a good log fire, surrounded by every luxury nature is capable of bestowing, would make a man think twice before refusing an invitation to pass the Christmas vacation within its hospitable walls.

The Baronet had long been a widower, his wife having died some seventeen years previous to the startling incident I am about to relate, in giving birth to his youngest daughter; and he had since lived a life of good old English fashioned comfort and ease along with his three children—Gertrude, Georgiana, and Geraldine.

He used to call them the "three G's," and in his heart he meant the three Graces, for he loved them all dearly, and, like many other doting parents, thought his children were paragons of perfection, as indeed they were as far as the acme of excellence in this world goes.

For myself, the only child of his deceased sister, Sir Marmaduke, having no son to whom should descend the time-honored name he bore so loyally, had adopted me when I was left an orphan at the age of ten, and he had always looked forward to the time when I should take a prominent part in politics.

But *l'homme propose et Dieu dispose!*

In my early days of manhood I had sadly outraged all the generosity he had so unbegrudgingly lavished upon me.

My college life had been one series of dissipation and riot; and, on entering the area of London society, I plunged headlong into the vortex of fashionable ruin, made speedy ducks and drakes of the competent inheritance I was possessed of by my birthright, and drew so largely and unwarrantably upon the liberality of my noble-hearted kinsman, that he was at length reluctantly compelled to call me to account for my reckless and extravagant behavior.

I listened to his well-founded arguments; and being sensible of the justice of them, I obeyed the commands he put upon me, with the only one desire to further my well-being, and in a few weeks left England to seek my fortunes in another hemisphere.

Separated from those social ties of modern Bohemia—no longer fettered to a set of boon but worthless companions—I had resolved that in my future career I would emulate to an extent the noble and extraordinary example set by my illustrious countryman, young Clive; and although I could not hope to present to my august Sovereign a second India, at least I would return home with some credit to those who had my welfare honestly at heart.

To recapitulate all the various dealings I had, to dive into all the technical particulars of business by which fortune is realized, would not only be wearisome to the reader, but also throughly unjust to the ghost that is to form the principal item in this event'ful history; so, with the knowledge that I had been eminently successful in a financial point of view in the land of the free, and that I had, by my earnest assiduity to my duties, become a partner in a house of considerable stability in one of the Western States, I must beg you to accompany me on my first visit to the Old Country since I had left it some five years back, a dissolute, idle, good-for-nothing spendthrift.

I reached England the first week in December, and although Sir Marmaduke would have given me a warm welcome had I chosen to present myself at his doors immediately on my arrival (for he had been well posted with the success I had achieved whilst abroad), I preferred taking up my quarters for the time being at "Long's Hotel," in Bond Street, and to await the result of the short epistle I sent acquainting him of my arrival in London.

Every man, woman, and child has a certain amount of conceit intermingled with their other good, bad, and indifferent qualities, and I must confess it somewhat nettled my vanity in not receiving an immediate answer of some sort that I consider my due; but my needless alarms were all quieted when I received a reply some three days afterwards, apologizing for the delay, and explaining that my uncle and his daughters had taken up their Christmas quarters at his seat in the north, and I was earnestly enjoined to proceed to Mervyn Towers, to enjoy what fare the good old Baronet could best offer me.

No man, I care not under what circumstances, is fond of making himself too cheap, and there is a degree of self-consequence in the composition of all natures that will assert itself when we have become indpendent of society; and with that instinctive feeling for my guide, I did not hasten to obey the mandate of my uncle with that unceremonious speed I might, and probably should, have done when I was dependent upon him for my wherewithal, although his open hand had always been extended towards me in the days when I had only deserved the family door to have been shut in my face; but, replying that matters of importance necessitated my remaining in the town for a week or so, I would, as soon as I was at liberty, accept his invitation to pass the festive season with my best and kindest of benefactors, and I hoped to be with him, at the latest, two days previous to that great day of days, the twenty-fifth of December—and I was.

I found the old Hall much as I had left it. My five years' absence did not seem to have produced a difference of five days in the well-remembered surroundings I everywhere met; and all my recent enterprise in the far West seemed rather to belong to ages ago, and the days of my youth were all revived as but of yesterday.

There was a goodly assembly of guests, for my uncle had always loved to gather around him at the jovial Yule-tide all those convivial spirits that had helped to cheer and gladden him on his earthly course, and whose hearts were bound together by more than one tie in the sacred bonds of friendship.

There were the faces that recalled to me times and incidents that had been dormant in my memory during my long absence abroad; but there was not one hand that did not accord me a hearty welcome back amongst them all again.

It was home indeed! But what of the three G's? Dear, kind girls! though at first a little shy, which they showed with all that becoming modesty that so befits the angelic nature of their loving sex, they were not too slow in showing their earnest appreciation of my being in their midst, and although I had left them as young misses just beginning, as it were, to enter their teens—for Gertrude, the eldest, was now only in her nineteenth year, they all remembered me as their manly cousin; and the time that had passed had seemed to heal up that disparity of years which had existed between us in days gone by.

They were pretty, very pretty girls; and yet they did not seem to have that fascination for me which is the forerunner of all earthly bliss—love.

What I had failed to find among all the American beauties it had been my lot to meet on the other side of the Atlantic, I was now at a loss to discover here; and I began to think the woman was not born who could awaken in me that passion which it is said burns at some time or another in the breast of every man—that is, if he has a spark of manhood about him—and that a dreary bachelor-hood was the only lot I could hope for in my own selfish world.

To most houses of the English aristocracy that have any pretensions to dating their bricks and mortar, or whatever other materials were used in the good old times, from the remote periods of Elizabeth or Queen Anne, there is attached some ghostly story of how the youthful heir was murdered at some dark hour towards midnight; or the lady-love of a younger brother was found strangled in her bed—the finger of scorn being pointed at the eldest born because of the preference she showed to his rival; or any other good tale of horror that will serve to awaken interest and excite the nerves at this especial time of the year: and whose respective spirits are said to pay their nocturnal visits, and to alarm the individuals who are unfortunate enough to occupy the tenements they claim as sacred to themselves when the day, or rather night, annually comes round for their appearance.

And Mervyn Towers was not without its scepticism on this head.

I mind me well how I used to frighten poor little Geraldine—then only twelve years of age, and vastly susceptible in the matter of ghosts—about her great-great-great-aunt Alicia, who was once supposed to have occupied the apartments in the right wing of the building which looks out upon the great highway to London, and from one of the casements of which she is said to have watched and watched through many a weary day and night for her lord's return from the great battle of Naseby, whither he had gone as an adherent to the cause of the unfortunate Charles; but all her tender anxiety was in vain, as he had fallen a victim to his loyalty to his master; and how when the news was brought to her of his death, she had cursed the rebel Roundheads, and vowed she would never cease her watching, living or dead, till Doomsday came to restore her loved one to her again; but, of late years, whether or no the Lady Alicia had grown disgusted with the progress civilization has affected in the belief of the supernatural, certain it is that her visits had grown few and far between, and her appearances were considered altogether a thing of the past, and seldom remembered, except when the house was overstocked with guests, and her rooms, which were for the most part left uninhabited, were required for the accommodation of Sir Marmaduke's friends.

Such was the case on the present occasion, and I was fated to become their occupant.

In spite of my continued remonstrances that I did not heed the frivolous talk they made about the ghost being certain to appear, the three G.'s kept up one continuous round of merriment on the subject, and in the end I was almost persuaded to be prepared to meet the awful catastrophe.

There was one thing they seemed unanimously agreed upon, which was that I must expect my visitor on no other evening but Christmas Eve, and that if she did not appear then, I might rest content; I should be left undisturbed in my rooms as long as I chose to occupy them; for ghosts have a knack of making themselves as disagreeable as possible, and that the night previous to Christmas would be the chosen time, so as to upset, if possible, my equanimity on the morrow.

"Very well," said I, "let her come; and if she be as truly beautiful as you all seem to paint her, I am sure she shall have my best thanks for giving me her company."

"But, sir," replied young Geraldine, "you must not forget you are in the presence of a distinguished lady; and you must acquit yourself as becomes a cavalier of the seventeenth century. We shall all be watching you through the key-hole I promise you!"

"Then, my dear cousin, you will have to get it enlarged," I rejoined; "for I am sure such a small aperture will not be sufficient to satisfy the curiosity of such a bevy as you will form!"

With such-like idle banter we passed the evening of my first day at the Towers; and as is the custom in country houses, except on special occasions, we retired to rest early.

Nothing unusual occurred during the night to disturb my peaceful slumbers; nor, indeed, was any excitement evinced at the breakfast-table the following morning, as it had been satisfactorily settled that the Lady Alicia's visit was to take place on the Eve of Christmas, and had I had anything to relate contrary to such an arrangement, I do not fancy my story would have been credited, for when a lady has made up her mind to anything, she does not like to have her wishes thwarted, not even by a ghost.

We all managed to get through the next day pleasantly enough, for there is in most households a deal of work to do on that occasion, and time was so much employed by the young folks in decorating and preparing for the feasting, that very little small talk was indulged in; and when night came everybody was too tired to revel in jokes, so the poor ghost was altogether neglected by her champions of the previous evening.

By eleven o'clock the whole house was hushed in complete solitude, and I was in the small sitting-room that adjoined my bed and dressing-rooms, seated before a comfortable fire, and, it must be confessed, patiently waiting the hour of midnight to see the upshot of my fair cousins' prognostication. I had thoroughly examined every nook and corner of the rooms, locked all the doors by which any entrance could be effected without my knowledge, and was perfectly satisfied that legitimate intrusion could not interfere with my privacy.

As I have before stated, the apartment in which I found myself looked out upon the turnpike road to the metropolis, but as the room was situated in the right wing of the edifice, it was only at the side window that the highway could be seen; and at this moment, through that identical latticed casement, the moon, which was shining brightly, (for it was a clear, frosty night), threw a streak of light across the room, which would otherwise have been in total darkness but for the fire, which was still burning.

I had resolved to remain up until the clock should strike twelve; not, of course, that I had the slightest expectation of being disturbed, but rather to have the laugh of my pretty relatives next morning.

At five minutes to the appointed hour I finished my cigar.

I then sat musing at the fire, which was now gradually dying out, and then slowly pulled out my watch with some degree of curiosity, and followed the minute hand round to every second, until it told that midnight had arrived, and no results.

I then rose from my chair, and saying to myself, "well, so much for the Lady Alicia's ghost!" went into the adjoining room.

A second had scarcely secured to elapse before I heard a voice, most sweetly mournful in its tone, proceeding from the side window of the room I had just left.

"Ah, me!—ah, me! And will he never return?"

I honestly confess I was startled, and hesitated for a moment what to do.

I then turned, and through the half-opened door beheld, standing full in the pale light of the moon, gazing straight out on the dreary road that lay below, the most beautiful creature I ever saw.

Her dress was that of a Royalist lady at the time of the Civil War.

I am not sufficiently well versed in the technicalities of the female attire of that troublesome period, or I would minutely describe it, and can only refer my too inquisitive readers to some work on historical costumes.

But there stood my ghost out in bold relief, in all the stately majesty of her wounded pride and her sorrow.

I was spellbound, and watched her with an intensity of feeling I have never experienced before or since.

"Never return!—never return!"

And after repeating these melancholy words, which had meant so much to her in her lifetime, she took one last longing look out upon the dismal landscape that lay stretched before her below, then turned and walked slowly and noiselessly towards the fire, which had now nearly burnt itself out.

Seating herself before its fading brightness, she brought forth a small spinet, and after striking a few notes, sang, in a voice serenely beautiful, the following words:—

"My lover has gone to the wars, alas!
Woe is me!
I wait his return, but wait in vain.
Alas, alas! woe is me!
My earthly lot I count for nought,
My darling they killed was my only thought,
And pray for the cause for which he fought;
Ah, me!"

When she had finished her short refrain, she immediately rose, and without even taking a farewell look from the window, where she had so often wearily watched whilst she was upon the earth, she seemed to avoid the light the moon threw across the room, but walking straight into the darkness, suddenly vanished, and that was the last I saw of the apparition of the Lady Alicia.

Now that I was alone again—for I was fully persuaded I had not been dreaming, nor was my brain feverish, nor my mind disorded—I instantly lit a lamp, and proceeded to re-examine the apartment from which my visitor had just disappeared, to convince myself there was no trickery in the matter.

Everything was in precisely the same order as when I had made my first investigations; the locks remained fast, and there were no visible means by which any mortal being could have gained an entrance.

And yet her defunct ladyship had most undoubtedly done so.

Under these circumstances there was nothing for it but for me to accept the fact as it stared me in the face, so lowering the lamp to a faint glimmer, in the case of a repetition of the mystery, and leaving the door open so that I could command a view of the room, I went to bed, to sleep as I best might.

After a restless night, I was up betimes in the morning, for I could not content myself with what I had seen.

What this strange feeling was that possessed me I was unable to fathom; but try as I might to banish the thought from my brain, nothing could efface the gentle visage of the lady Alicia from my memory.

The lovely features seemed to be before me wherever I went, whatever I did; and, if it had been a living countenance I had beheld, I should have most decidedly concluded that love had cast its potent spell around me.

I have heard that falling in love is the greatest ecstasy this world affords; and at this moment I could readily understand the sentiment.

But what could I do?

The idea of worshipping a woman who had been dead nearly three hundred years was preposterous, and anyone would naturally think me only fit to become the inmate of a lunatic asylum if it became known; but I meant to keep my secret.

Next morning I found everybody assembled in the breakfast-parlor, anxiously awaiting my coming.

I was a sort of hero for the time being.

I took my usual seat at the table, but I could perceive all were in a state of excitement to hear how I had passed the preceding night; but I did not feel inclined to satisfy them so readily as they wished.

"Well, Reginald, my boy," began Sir Marmaduke, 'how did you sleep last night?'

"I had as much rest as I needed, thank you," I replied; "and early rising is the recognized custom through all the country I have so lately left."

"Her ladyship did not disturb you, then?" urged my uncle.

"No, sir; not in the least."

"But she has upset your appetite, I think, for you are scarcely eating anything!" said G. No. 1.

"I feel confident our pretty ancestor honored him with a visit," said the incorrigible Geraldine."

"And what if she did?" I asked, for it was not my intention to deny that fact; "she had no cause to complain of my want of gallantry."

"I told you so," said my youthful tormentor, addressing herself to the whole assembly.

And they all joined in her merry, ringing laughter.

"Well, what was she like?" demanded Sir Marmaduke. "Has posterity done justice to her beauty?"

"I hardly think that possible," I said. "She was, to my idea, loveliness personified."

"I do believe Cousin Reginald has fallen in love with the ghost!" added Geraldine.

"Had she been a living creature, I might have done so," I replied; "and should not have been ashamed of my infatuation."

"There's a confession!" laughs the young G. again. "Why didn't you speak to her, sir?"

"I was so captivated with her presence, I could not. It seemed impossible that such a faultless countenance should belong merely to an apparition. I could not realize she was a living being; and yet, as I looked upon her, I inwardly said with the poet,—

"Can this be death? There's bloom upon her cheek,
But now I see it is no living hue
But a strange hectic, like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the pallid cheek of Death."

"Beautiful! And now you must tell us all about," demanded Geraldine.

And I complied.

When I had concluded, there seemed to be a general tittering all round, which I could not exactly account for, knowing as I did that I had told nothing but the plain truth.

"Did you like her singing very much?" asked Geraldine.

"It was worth crossing the Atlantic to hear her" I said; "and I promise you, if you will keep the same rooms for next Christmas, I will be here to occupy them."

"Then she must have had a beautiful voice. It is strange no one else in the house heard it," said Gertrude.

"I'll wager she did not sing better than my little pet here," said Sir Marmaduke, indicating his youngest daughter; for he was very proud of his children's accomplishments.

"I am afraid you would lose, sir," I replied; "with all due deference to my cousin's capabilities.

"Wait till you hear her, my boy!"

"And when shall that be?"

"Directly we have finished breakfast, sir, if you choose—and Geraldine is willing."

"Oh, I am quite willing, papa!" said the ever willing young maiden. "I am not a bit afraid of my rival."

And so it was agreed and we was to be put to the test, and I was to decide the result.

As soon as the morning meal was got through, we all adjourned to the drawing-room, and my cousin took her seat at the piano.

"What shall I play, papa?"

"Anything you like, my dear. Give Reginald that song of your own, that he may know your talents are not confined to one thing only."

So, without music, in a clear, shrill voice, pure as the nightingale's note, she began,—

"My lover has gone to the wars against
Woe is me!"

"Stop!" I cried, interrupting her after the first line. "I have heard that song before!"

"Where?" was the general inquiry.

"Last night, in the haunted room," I hastily replied, "and the voices are identically the same."

"That's nonsense, my boy," said Mr. Marmaduke, laughing. "Go on with your singing, my dear."

The stanza was then finished without further intrusion.

"Now for your decision, Reginald."

"I have nothing to decide, sir; the voices are precisely the same."

"And belong to one common owner," said Sir Marmaduke, with a hearty laugh, in which everybody else joined.

"I do not understand," I faltered out.

"But you shall in a minute or two," he answered. "Here, Geraldine!"

She had left the room.

"Well, then, Gertrude, play something as an overture to her return.

My eldest cousin obeyed the request, and when she had finished, in walked the ghost of the previous night, whose many charms I had been extolling to such an enthusiastic degree.

It was Geraldine!

* * * * * *

But little more remains to be told.

The question that will naturally arise in the minds of all who peruse this sketch is—How was it I did not recognize my gay deceiver when she made her first appearance as her defunct relative.

I can only answer that her disguise was so complete, the change so radically perfect the ignorance of how she could possibly have made her entrance and exit so mysteriously, all added in convincing me there was no deception; and I fully and truly believed her to be an apparition of some kind, of what agency I failed to fathom.

Why it was I did not discover her "wilfulness when I first saw her, as I had every license to do—for few young ladies will object to a liberty of that description,—I do not know, except it be that I had a sort of inward determination that no woman should ever make me subject to her fascination—which is a selfish kind of feeling that I believe every man has before he really falls in love; but I will own, for the edification of lady readers, that having done so through what may be termed underhanded means, I am not going to compromise my word, nor insult my fair cousin by retracting all I had said in her favor.

Besides, she really was a very pretty girl, and a good one into the bargain, which means a great deal more to any sensible and right-minded bachelor.

The way employed to effect her appearing and disappearing at will was simple enough. In most of the antiquated mansions of England there are secret staircases—for in the uncertain times in which they were erected, such were considered quite as essential, if not more so, than their rival, the *escalier*; and Mervyn Towers was no exception to this rule; and I expect, in times gone by, many a noble has owed his head to its existence.

The secrecy was quite new to me, as my uncle had not disclosed its mysteries to his children nor myself during the time I was at with him, as young people—that is, very young people—generally like to abuse a privilege they should most respect.

It was only on my not joining them immediately on receiving their invitation, under pretence of business detaining me in town, which they did not believe, that they determined to be level with me for my indolence, in the way I have set forth.

That, I think is all I have to say.

No, not quite all.

For fear she should practise any more of her antics upon some unfortunate individual who should perchance incur her displeasure, I took the precaution of marrying Miss Geraldine as soon after the Christmas holidays as was found convenient; and I am happy to confess I believe I possess the best little wife in the universe, and I can only hope that every married man can say the same.

Bessie and Myself.

BY HENRY FRITH.

I think I must have been a very remarkable young man when I attained the age of eighteen years.

My too indulgent parents spare [illegible] no pains in order to have me prepared to act well my part in the great drama of life; and they looked forward to the time with anxious longing when my success would render [illegible]

I, too, [illegible] the [illegible] I thought I was [illegible] upon, and [illegible] [illegible] upon me, [illegible] [illegible] them. [illegible] me to be [illegible] and [illegible] would reflect great credit on myself.

At an early age I was placed under the care of experienced teachers, and applied myself somewhat to study; but my ideas were so exalted that my teachers often found it necessary to reduce them to more moderate expectations.

As soon as I was old enough I was placed at college, and there I remained except what time of my college course was broken by repeated visits home.

My vacations I usually spent at home; and I spent them not wholly unlike many students spend their vacations.

I believe that Bessie—she was my second cousin [illegible] [illegible] your mind then all my studies during the entire year.

Once I inquired for the "child" directly after arriving home, and was informed that she was out, but would be in soon; and I took myself into the parlor to wait until the remarkable young lady should make her appearance.

I do not think she knew I was there, for she came in singing at the top of her voice.

She certainly would not have imposed on the modesty of such a fine young gentleman as myself if she had known it.

Yet perhaps it would have made no difference; for, upon being reminded that someone might be in, that I might be there, she came bounding into the room without any sign of confusion, and said,

"Goodness gracious! You do not say that is you, Arthur?"

"It certainly is," said I, being thus carelessly addressed. "Come, give me a kiss Cousin Bessie!"

She laughed outright at this, and speedily came forward with a kind of roguish look, alleging that since she had attained the age of fifteen she did not permit her cousin to kiss her like a child; and throwing her head a little to one side, caressed most lovingly, her upper lip in imitation of my mustache.

Time wore on. I was no more the [illegible] published lad; all those brusqueries were abandoned, and I had now become quite a finished man of the world.

Now I nursed attentively my microscopic moustache now I dressed in the most [illegible]

I had heard it said that such articles of the toilet as I made use of were unnecessary to constitute a fine gentleman; but I did not believe it, and it was my intention to write a quarto volume, in which I would refute the philosophy of such [illegible]

One morning, after I had spent about two hours before the mirror in arranging my hair and adjusting my cravat, I seated myself quietly in the library, reading a rather humorous book which had just appeared, and was consequently much interested.

While thus engaged, I felt a hand on my shoulder, and, turning round, descried Bessie. She looked very beautiful. Her loose hair hung in ringlets over her shoulders; her eyes were dancing with merriment and her red lips pouted just enough to [illegible]

I could not endure the temptation: I leaned back a little, and kissed them for once in my life.

Elated at this test of strategy, I was bent upon its repetition. A battle then ensued, in which there was an awful destruction of [illegible]. My shirt collar gave way, and at the same time Bessie's pretty string of beads broke and ran races over the floor.

She fought fair and hard, but yielded quietly for the want of breath and strength. So I kissed her red lips again, and called her "my dear Bessie." Oh, blessed spell of sentimentality! Good-bye world, ambitious schemes, classics—everything; for I had but the one idea—none other than that Bessie was the dearest little creature in all the world. But why prolong the story further? I need only add that, when I had proved myself as great a man in intellect as I had a gentleman in society, she did not refuse to be my dear Bessie.

THE DOLIEST OF PEOPLE.—The Terra del Fuego Indians, the ugliest mortals perhaps that ever breathed, are always on the lookout for passing vessels, and come out in canoes to beg and to trade skins for tobacco. The Fuegians, of "Canoe Indians," as they are commonly called to distinguish them from the Patagonians, who dislike the water and prefer to navigate on horseback, have no settled habitation.

They are a simple people, with a dirty and bloated appearance, and faces that would scare a mule. They have broad features, low foreheads, over which the hair hangs in tangled lumps, high cheek bones, flat noses, enormous chins and jaws, and mouths like a crocodile, with teeth that add to their repulsiveness.

Their skin is said to be of a copper color. They consider it unhealthful to bathe. They are short in stature, round shouldered, squatty, and bloated, a physical deformity said to be due to the fact that most of their lives are spent in canoes. The women are even more repulsive in their appearance than the men, and the children, which are uncommonly numerous, look like young baboons.

Their intelligence seems to be confined to a knowledge of boating and fishing, and they exercise great skill in both pursuits. Scientists who have investigated them say that they are of the very lowest order of the human race, many degrees below the Digger Indians.

Although these people live in a perpetual winter, where the [illegible] they go almost stark naked! Pieces of the otter and guanaco are used for blankets, which are worn about the shoulders and afford some protection; but under these neither woman nor man wear anything whatever, except shoes and leggings made of the same material, which protect the feet from the rocks.

There is some little attempt at adornment made by both sexes, in the way of necklaces, bracelets, and earrings made of fish bones and sea shells, which are often ingeniously joined together. The woman will sell the skin blankets that cover their backs for tobacco, standing, meantime, as nude as a statue of Venus!

Their food consists of mussels, fish, sea animals, and flesh of similar sorts, which they catch with the rudest sort of implements. Their fishing lines are made of grass and their hooks of fish bones.

For weapons they have bows and spears, the former having strings made of the entrails, and the latter being long slender poles, with tips of sharpened bone. They also use slings with great dexterity which are made of woven grass, and are said to bring down animals at long range.

During the day they are always on the water in canoes or dugouts made of the trunks of trees, the whole family going together, and usually consisting of a man, two or three wives, and as many of children as can be crowded into the boat. When night falls they go ashore and sleep in wide huts altogether.

HISTORY OF CRINOLINE.—The Frankfurter *Zeitung* contains an interesting article on the origin and history of that revived monstrosity, the crinoline. Like many other devices which we are accustomed to regard as comparatively modern, the crinoline seems in reality to be exceedingly ancient.

Hesiod, who wrote in the eighth century before Christ, must have observed something of the kind, for he advises young men not to be led astray by certain women of his day who wore their clothes puffed out behind. For more than twenty centuries after Hesiod's time however, the crinoline languished in obscurity; and it was not until after Queen Elizabeth had come to the throne of England that the farthingale became fashionable.

The farthingale or vertugale, which served to extend the skirts of the ladies of quality who were Shakespeare's contemporaries, is described as having been made of hair and wadding.

In the eighteenth century whalebone generally took the place of these cumbrous materials; but already iron or steel hoops were in use in England; and, covered with silk or cotton, steel hoops won their way to universal favor, until, a few years ago, they were partially superseded by folds of highly [illegible]

If "dress improvers" were actually worn by the Greek women of Hesiod's day, it is not improbable that they were also worn 50 years earlier, and that Helen, when she fled with Paris to Troy, wore some primitive kind of crinoline.

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Our Young Folks.

MOLLY AND THE MANDARIN.

BY JULIA A. GODDARD.

IT all came out o' a china bowl, that was standing on the walnut cabinet.

In the bowl was a great posy of chinasters of all colors, from pale pink to deep red, and from lilac to dark amethyst, beside white ones and all looking so radiant, that Molly's eyes were quite dazzled as she gazed at them.

So she closed them: and when she opened them again she rubbed them many times, for she thought something had happened.

A beautiful light had come into the room and Molly was saying to herself—

"The harvest-moon, like a golden shield,
Is shining over the harvest-field."

And Molly sighed to think that she was not there; and as she sighed she look out of the window.

The window opened down to the ground, and it was wide open now, for the night was warm.

But instead of the smooth lawn sloping down to the river, there was a stiff-looking garden full of roses, forget-me-nots, clove pinks, and splendid asters, which must of course have come out of the bowl, though, who had planted them there so quickly Molly could not imagine.

The garden stretched down to the river, and there was a red china palisade at the end.

In the middle of the garden, the figure of Flora crowned with roses, that usually stood on the cabinet, beside the china bowl, was looking very disconsolate, and trying to hide amongst the rose-bushes.

Molly looked round at the cabinet, but no Flora was there, and glancing at the china bowl, she saw that it was now white without any painted figures upon it, not even a flower.

"Why, they've gone into the garden too," said Molly, as she saw a Chinese lady with a pale blue dress, holding a fan in one hand, a second lady in pink and green, and several other figures that were quite familiar to her, in the garden also.

They were walking up and down, talking volubly, and nodding to one another, whilst they pointed contemptuously at Flora.

"Was ever such a thing known?" said one, "she ought to be Greek and she isn't. How could they think at Dresden, of dressing her up in a flowery chintz gown? It is very ridiculous."

"They know nothing of Cina in Dresden, said another;" flowered chintz, absurd!"

"Now we are known at once by our dresses being appropriate. We are of the imperial family, every one knows it, our dress shows it, and if the Emperor does not invite us to tea as often as he might do, he can't help our being his relatives."

And they waved their fans at Flora and cried—"Ha! ha! ha! He! he! he!"

And a little boy pointed his finger at Flora.

"He! he! he!" he cried.

Flora began to weep, and nestled down amongst the rose-bushes; her crown fell off, and only the top of her head was to be seen with its shining flaxen curls.

The basket of roses she held in her hand had fallen to the ground, and the roses rolled out of it.

"What hair!" said an older lady, who was sitting down and fanning herself with a large white fan, she too cried—

"Ha! ha! ha! He! he! he!"

Not far off was a summer-house, and an old Mandarin looked out of the window and said—

"What is the matter?
Why what do you chatter
And make such a clatter?"

Then one Chinese lady pointed to the rose-bushes, and said "Look."

And the Mandarin put his head farther out of the window, and looked, saying—

"I see nothing."

"It is Flora in a chintz gown. What would the Greeks say?" said the second lady.

"What do you know about the Greeks?" asked the Mandarin, angrily, "nothing at all; and as to what they would say, you know still less. Mind your own affairs."

And he shut down the window with a bang.

Now the ladies were still pointing to the rose-bushes, and saying, "There," when suddenly the roses that had fallen out of Flora's basket began to fly about as if they had wings, and they flew against the Chinese ladies and the little boy, and instead of saying, "Ha! ha! ha! He! he! he!" as they had done before, they all began to cry out, "Oh! oh! oh!" for the roses were armed with thorns, and pricked them sharply.

The Mandarin had by that time come into the garden, and said—

"This comes of meddling with the Greeks."

Molly felt sorry for the Chinese ladies, though they had laughed at Flora and made her weep.

"Oh, Flora, Flora, do take away your roses!" she exclaimed, as she stepped into the garden and pushed aside the rose-bushes; but there was no Flora there.

The roses too had gone; for at Molly's voice they flew away towards the corn-field and so Molly knew that Flora must be there.

* * * * *

How did Flora get to the corn-field, for Molly had never seen her come from amongst the bushes? and how did Molly get there? that she never knew: there was no bridge, and the river was too wide to jump across, and she could not swim.

The Chinese ladies had crossed in a little blue boat, like the one on the willow-pattern plate, but they had not offered a place in their boat to Molly.

So all Molly knew was that she was in the corn-field, with the great golden harvest-moon shining brightly down upon it.

What a light it gave! and the field looked like a sea of gold, and the corn-sheaves like golden mountains.

Troops of tiny reapers and gleaners were moving about, and Flora was standing in the midst of them.

Her crown of roses was glittering with dewdrops, and her chintz gown had been washed and ironed, for it got quite soiled among the rose-bushes.

Yes, there she was, looking even more beautiful than she did on the cabinet, with her china complexion, and her long fair hair.

She had on a pair of high-heeled shoes, at which the Chinese ladies laughed and said—

"Ha! ha! He! he! what would the Greeks say?"

But no sooner did the reapers hear their voices, than they advanced towards them, and pointing their sickles at the tottering feet of the Chinese ladies, said—

"Too small are they,
Let's cut them away."

The Chinese ladies screamed "Oh! oh! oh! as they had done when the Mandarin spoke to them.

And then Molly cried out very loud to them—

"Oh, pray don't, dear good reapers;" and as she spoke a rumbling and a tumbling was heard, and the voice of the Mandarin was calling—

"Help! help! I cannot roll it along by myself."

And Molly looked round.

Was it a white marble mountain coming along sideways? it seemed very large in comparison with the fairy-reapers.

As Molly took a more careful view, she saw that it was the china bowl, that had now no paintings upon it, and the Mandarin was rolling it slowly along.

He seemed very hot and angry, and shouted to the Chinese ladies—

"Come come, come home without delay; the Emperor will cut off your heads if he finds you have gone away. I told you to leave the Greeks alone. Why don't you mind what I say?"

Molly was bewildered.

Then she turned to Flora, who was standing beside her.

"Which do you like best, Greece or Dresden?" she asked.

"Dresden," answered Flora.

"And you don't mind having a chintz gown?"

"Oh, no, I like it, and these blue ribbons are beautiful, so are the rosettes on my shoes. It is much better than my Greek dress, which indeed was no dress hardly at all."

"Ah," said Molly, meditatively, "like a Parian figure; but now you have got into China, no Dresden——" and Molly hesitated. "I don't quite understand; you are China and you are not, and the asters are not, and yet——"

"I am Dresden and China, Dresden China."

Molly shook her head.

"You are Dresden China, and the ladies are China China, and the Mandarin?"

Molly gave a start, for the Mandarin was becoming furious, he was shouting—

"Away, away, without delay,
If you would live another day!
Get up, get up, get up, I say!"

"It is so slippery," said the pink and green lady, as she touched the bowl with her tiny foot.

"And so cold," said the lady in blue.

But the Mandarin said, "Up, up up," and he pushed the ladies and the boy close to the bowl.

At first they all clung together, but gradually they took up their former positions on the bowl.

Soon the red palisades appeared, and then the summer-house, into which the Mandarin stepped.

In a solemn voice he said—

"Roll, roll, home, home, bowl, bowl!"

And as the china bowl rolled along, the Mandarin and the ladies became flatter and flatter, and Molly supposed that by the time they reached home they would have smoothed down into the polished china. Whatever could it all mean?

"I suppose I must mean the walnut cabinet, I suppose," said Molly, "I suppose I shall find the bowl there when I go home."

And she turned to look again at the harvest fairies.

But as she did so, a great black cloud covered the moon, and it suddenly became quite dark, and she heard Flora saying to herself—

"Here I must stay till break of day,
It is too dark to find the way."

"Where are you?" asked Molly, stretching out her hand, which Flora took, saying—

"Here"

"I will carry you home," said Molly, lifting her up in her arms, "but answer me a question first."

"What is it?"

"Where are the harvest fairies?"

"They always go when the moon goes; besides, the Chinese ladies disturbed them. They don't like foreigners."

"But you are a foreigner, Flora."

"Yes, but they don't mind me, because I take care of the flowers."

"How shall we get across the river, I wonder?" said Molly, in some perplexity.

"Oh, somehow or other, one scarcely knows the best way," replied Flora.

And certainly Molly did not know how she got across; she only knew that she must have crossed it, for she found herself in the room at home.

The window was still open, and of course the china bowl had come through it, for it was standing upon the cabinet.

Molly placed Flora beside it.

Suddenly the harvest-moon shone out brightly again.

"Oh, Flora!" exclaimed Molly, "the fairies will have come back, and will be dancing amongst the golden stubble."

But Flora did not make any reply.

Perhaps after all her fatigues she was rather too sleepy.

IN A TOY-BOX VILLAGE.

BY HENRY FRITH.

"I SHALL bring in the milk and bread before mother comes home," cried Jan, flinging on his cap, and clattering away to the back door in his big wooden shoes.

Mina popped the baby's round cap on the baby's round head, and ran full speed after him.

"I don't want you," said big Jan.

But little Mina said, "We want to come."

So they all set off together by the back door, and came round the corner into the village street.

It was a Dutch village.

The houses were painted yellow, with red roofs, and inside they were all as clean and neat as the kitchen of a doll's house.

The whole village looked as if it had been taken out of a toy-box, and magnified to life-size.

There were the yellow houses on each side, with red roofs and green doors; and every house had a garden fenced in with white paling, with red and yellow tulips in the middle, and in every garden there was a tree with its top clipped trim and round, like a toy-box tree.

And in the street crowds of gay folk were walking about, because a fair was going on at the other end; and all the men were black, with silver buttons and buckled shoes; and all the women had white caps, and shoulder-shawls, and big skirts stuck out with hoops till they looked the shape of a bell.

Jan bought the bread and milk, and when Mina was tired he carried the baby.

"You were afraid to stay in the house alone," he said. "Girls are afraid of everything. Now, you would be afraid to go near any of the wind-mills far over there."

"They are only draining the water out of the fields into the dykes," little Mina said. "Why should I go away to them?"

"You would be afraid to go to the canal by yourself," said Jan.

"Mother told me not to," said Mina.

"Oh, you stupid little girl! I wish you would go somewhere," cried big Jan, losing patience, and giving back the plump baby to her. "I just want to go and have a peep at the fair."

"Mother told us not to, Jan."

"Mother told us not to go on the merry-go-rounds," Jan argued. "But I only want to look on. Here; hold the loaf and the jug, and I shall be back in a minute."

With the word, he slipped the handle of the jug on the finger, and laid the loaf on top of the baby, and away.

Poor little Mina!

The baby was so fat and the loaf was so heavy, and the jug was so slippery, she could not carry them all. She gave the baby the loaf to hold, and he popped it over her shoulder; and then she handed him the jug to hold while she picked up the loaf—it had broken into two loaves now.

And when she stopped to pick it up, he turned the jug over, and they were both streaming with milk. So Mina sat down in the middle of the toy-box village and began to cry.

"What can I do for you, poor little girl?" said one of the rosy-cheeked women, finding her there crying, while the baby was crowing.

And to the rosy-cheeked woman we must leave her, and see after Jan at the fair.

What a crowd! and what a noise of buying and selling, and laughing, and shouting and organ-grinding!

There was a whole row of merry-go-rounds—or perhaps you would call them round-abouts.

Instead of wooden horses, they had wooden lions, and tigers, and unicorns, and dragons, and all sorts of painted animals.

"Somebody tumbled! Stop it! Stop it!" screamed the crowd at the biggest of the round-abouts.

The organ-grinding stopped, the mirrors and gilding, and all the whirl of painted wooden animals, with their riders, came slowly to a stand-still.

Big Jan got up off the ground with his hand to his face; he had fallen off and had banged his eye against the corner of the cake-stall close by.

He would have a black eye—an eye of all colors. Oh! poor Jan! And yet, you see, he had only gone to look at the fair.

Well, they marched him home to that cottage that was like a doll's kitchen. His mother was there, and the neighbors flocked in.

One of them dragged him to the pump, and held his head against it, as they all thought cold pump was the very best thing for him to keep his eye from turning all colors to-morrow.

And his mother said, "How can I trust you again, Jan?"

But a sweet little forgiving voice said, "Mother dear, some of my cake might do his eye good."

Some of Mina's cake! How was that?

Why, that rosy-cheeked woman who picked her up had taken her home, and filled her jug again, and given her a great round griddle-cake to carry with the broken loaf, and she had carried the baby home for Mina; so Mina thanked her with a kiss, and the baby thanked her too, by putting his thumb in her eye.

Next day Jan's eye had nearly as many colors in it as there were in this pretty village: so currant cake was as good a cure as cold pump.

ARAB SAINTS.—A court was filled says a traveller, with forms of Arab men and women squatting on sacred mats, and facing a platform were eight Arabs engaged in a fantastic and fascinating dance. As the musicians began to play slowly they moved the upper parts of their bodies forward and backward and from side to side. Gradually the music became faster, and faster and faster they went, throwing their limbs and bodies about in almost inconceivable positions, until I could scarcely believe that the rapidly whirling mass before me were human beings.

Several hundred years ago there lived in a pashalik in Arabia a learned marabout (priest) who gathered about him many disciples, but as his teachings were not consistent with the Koran he drew upon himself the enmity of the reigning pasha, who banished him and his disciples to the Desert of Sahara, whither they were taken and left without food or water. Then the marabout arose, declaring he had received a revelation from Heaven, telling him that nothing they could eat would injure them. Accordingly they feasted upon scorpions, snakes and prickly pear leaves. When this miracle came to the ears of the pasha, he enticed them by offers of pardon to his palace. He threw them into a dungeon filled with scorpions, bits of crockery, glass and other similar tonics, and told them they would not be released until they ate everything.

It was no difficult task, as they had been growing fat on the same sort of food. The pasha, having seen them eat, granted them all a full pardon and made Ali Ben his vizier. The descendants of Ali and his disciples formed a sect, who every year, on the anniversary of the trial in the dungeon celebrate the event in the manner described. I am told that in some places the sect still eat scorpions and chew glass."

AT THE END.—It may be presumed that funerals date from the death of the first man; but the Egyptians were the inventors of coffins, the open bier, such as is still used in Eastern countries, being employed previously. The earliest coffins were made of pasteboard glued together and painted with hieroglyphics, stone and sycamore being sparingly used for persons of exalted rank. As the Egyptians believed in the transmigration of the soul, which in their opinion, took 3,000 years to pass through the various stages before again animating a human body, they were particularly careful in carrying out the details of the ceremonial with regard to the disposal of the dead. Forty to seventy days were spent in mourning, during which time the body was embalmed. One very curious observance, according to Diodorus, was judgment before burial. On the day appointed for the funeral forty judges ranged themselves in a semi-circle on the side of a lake over which the body was to be taken. A boat was launched, and before the coffin was placed on board, a complaint that the deceased had led an evil life might be put forward by any one prepared to substantiate it. The judges then deliberated, and, if satisfied that the charge was well-founded, pronounced sentence of exclusion of burial; but, on the other hand, should the complainant fail to make good his case, he was mulcted in heavy damages.

A FRIENDLY OFFICE.—It is sometimes true kindness to press on another person the duty of doing something not quite pleasant. For instance, some people have a great objection, when they are in bad health, to calling in medical aid. The really kind friend ought to point out the foolishness of neglecting to take all measures necessary to restore the health. Frequently despondency and irritability arise from nerve-disturbance; sometimes the cause is want of occupation, but often over-work produces the same result. A wise physician will discriminate between the causes, and probably be able to remove the nervous condition. The true friend will see the system recommended is carried out, even if the sufferer is at times inclined to murmur.

Dr. McCosh, President of Princeton College, has two daughters who are great walkers. They are in the habit of walking to Trenton and back, a distance of about twenty miles, where they do their shopping One day a dude accosted Miss McCosh on the road and said in a usual manner, "Beg pardon, but may I walk with you?" She replied, "Certainly," and let herself out a little. After the first half the masher began to gasp, and then as she passed on with a smile, he sat down panting on a mile stone and mopped the perspiration from his brow.

THE LAND OF YOUTH.

BY J. A. E.

There is a far-off pleasant land
  Where gentle airs do ever blow,
Where hopes fulfilled—a smiling band—
With faultless love go hand in hand,
  And thornless roses grow—
Where life is fuller, more complete
Than heart can dream or words repeat—

A region most supremely blest
  With fertile soil and sunny clime,
And all that satisfies the quest
Of souls that crave with earth's unrest,
  As Eden in its prime
Held all good gifts without offence
For Adam in his innocence.

'Tis thus I see th' enchanted land
  Of Youth when I look back thereon—
A heritage of promise grand
And dreams too vague to understand
  Till their sweet life is gone—
A rich and boundless kingdom where
All that we knew was good and fair.

Yet could it be that we might go
  To dwell within that land again,
To feel its hopes and pleasures grow
From bud to blossom, yet to know
  How brief they are and vain,
Who then would wish again to tread
The path whereon such light was shed?

Lost land of Youth that now we deem
  So free from fault, our songs may tell
Of young Ambition's ardent theme
Or early Love's delightful dream,
  But yet we know full well
That ev'n to taste those joys again
We would not brave th' awak'ning pain!

ABOUT ODD RINGS.

The ring of invisibility, such as Gyges of old is said to have worn, occupied a large share of popular superstition in early times. In a curious and rare work, printed in the year 1685, is a peculiar receipt for making this charmed ring. "Dissolve the eyes of a quail, or of the sea-tench, with a little water in a glass vessel for seven days, and add a little oyle; put a little of this into the candle, or only anoynt a rag, and light among the company, and they will look upon themselves as devils on fire, so that everyone will run his way. In the sardonyx stone, engrave a quail, and under its feet a sea-tench, and put a little of the said confection under the stone in the hollow of the ring, and when you are unwilling to be seen, anoint your face all over with the aforesaid confection, and wear the ring, and no man shall see you if you do anything in the house; no, not if you should take anything away that is in the house."

It is remarkable that the story of Gyges comes up again in the Welsh romance of Morte d'Arthur. One is there said to have a ring which possessed the virtue of rendering the wearer invisible and which, with Guendolen's chess-board, was reckoned among the thirteen wonders of Great Britain.

In the Mabinogian, stones conferring invisibility are frequently mentioned, usually in the favorite form of a gem set in a ring. "Take this ring," said the damsel with yellow curling hair, "and put it on thy finger with the stone inside thy hand, and close thy hand upon the stone; and so long as thou concealest it, it will surely conceal thee."

Montaigne, in one of his essays, alludes to the Platonic ring, that renders the wearer invisible, turned inward towards the palm of the hand, and adds: "If such were common, a great many would on many occasions hide themselves when they ought most to appear."

The ring of invisibility which belonged to Otnet, King of Lombardy, given to him by the Queen-mother when he went to gain in marriage the Soldan's daughter, had, among other virtues, the very useful one of directing the wearer the right road to take in traveling.

The fish and the ring, however, is one of the oldest traditions we have. In the Talmud fables, the prodigy of Solomon's ring is duly related, and ancient writers have enlarged upon the same theme.

"Here in Hippo," says Augustine, "there was a poor and holy old man, by name Florentius, who obtained a living by tailoring. This man once lost his coat, and, not being able to purchase another to replace it, he came to the shrine of the Twenty Martyrs, and prayed aloud to them, beseeching that they would enable him to get another garment.

"A number of silly boys who overheard him, followed him on his departure, scoffing at him, and asking him whether he had begged fifty pence from the martyrs to buy a coat. The poor man went on silently towards home, and, as he passed near the sea, he saw a large fish which had been cast upon the sand, and was still panting. The other persons who were present allowed him to take up the fish, which he brought to one Catosus, a cook, and a good Christian, who bought it off him for three hundred pence. With this he meant to purchase wool, which his wife might spin, and make into a garment for him.

"When the cook cut up the fish, he found within its belly a ring of gold, which his conscience persuaded him to give to the poor man from whom he bought the fish. He did so, saying at the same time, 'Behold how the Twenty Martyrs have clothed you!'"

Recognition by means of a ring is pleasingly rendered in a tale of Italy, which is called Zendrarola, equivalent to our Cinderella, of which, with a few variations, it is a counterpart. The heroine, in love with a young Count, obtains the place of kitchen-maid in his palace; but goes to a ball, richly dressed, where the Count, not knowing her thus changed, falls in love with her. He gives her a ring, which, in her renewed capacity of cook, she sends up in his soup. The Count recognizes the ring, and marries her.

In one of Hawthorne's notes he relates a singular incident that befel one of his friends while a junior at college. Being in want of money to purchase shirts, and other necessaries, and not knowing how to obtain it, he set out on a walk from Cambridge to Boston. On the way he cut a stick, and after walking a short distance perceived that something had become attached to the end of it. This proved to be a gold ring, bearing the motto, "God speed thee, friend!" an encouragement to persevere in his efforts for improvement, and a salutary assistance to him.

Grains of Gold.

The more you say, the less people remember.

The best mind-cure is to make up one's mind to.

Simplicity of character is the natural result of profound thoughts.

The plant of happiness cannot thrive without the air of cheerfulness.

The innocence of the intention abates nothing of the mischief of the example.

Many people mistake stubbornness for bravery, meanness for economy, and vileness for wit.

The harvest gathered in the fields of the past is to be brought home for the use of the present.

Promises made in the time of affliction require a better memory than people commonly possess.

Cheerfulness is an excellent wearing quality. It has been called the bright weather of the heart.

The misery of idleness is nearly as manifest in high life as in the rags and filth of extreme poverty.

We should be as careful of our words as of our actions, and as far from speaking ill as from doing ill.

To avenge one's self is to confess that one has been wounded; but it is not the part of a noble mind to be wounded by an injury.

Give no quarter unto those vices which are of thine inward family, and having a root in thy temper plead a right and propriety in thee.

Those that would be safe have need to be suspicious of the tempter. The garrison that sounds a parley is not far from being surrendered.

Who is wise? He that learns from every one. Who is powerful? He that governs his passions. Who is rich? He that is contented.

He who expresses in his conduct justice and charity, accomplishes the most beautiful works; the good man is, in his way, the greatest of all artists.

Knowledge must be made vital in the heart before it can blossom into conduct, and the continual passing of right feeling into right action alone can form a worthy character.

Men who complain most loudly about the inequalities of the human lot, are generally a little blind to those great stores of wealth and blessings that no class can monopolize, and no wealth can buy.

The man who will not execute his resolutions when they are fresh upon him, can have no hope for them afterwards; they will be dissipated, lost, and perish in the hurry of the world, or in the slough of indolence.

Leaves are light, and useless, and idle, and wavering, and changeable, and even dance; yet God has made them part of the oak, in so doing he has given us a lesson not to deny the stout-heartedness within because we see the lightsomeness without.

He who can wait for what he desires takes the course not to be exceedingly grieved if he fails of it; he, on the contrary, who labors after a thing too impatiently, thinks the success, when it comes, is not a recompense equal to all the pains he has been at about it.

Femininities.

All the women of Paraguay chew tobacco.

In the new usage, fashionable dinners are not long.

Queen Victoria's favorite novelist is George Eliot.

There was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass.

A Pittsburg, Pa., lady, who owns eight or ten houses, gets tipsy in the streets.

A Nantucket woman claims to have had a wart taken off her nose by faith cure.

A girl is sweet, but, oh, how bitter the same girl is when a dress doesn't fit her!

The temperature, says a man, of a woman's love, is materially lessened by poverty's refrigerator.

A ton of ropes made from the hair of the women of Japan is used in building the $3,000,000 Buddhist temple at Kioto.

The Japanese government proposes to decorate ladies who have distinguished themselves for the benefit of their country.

A Parisian woman proposes to bore a big hole into the earth to see what is going on inside the crust of this mysterious planet.

An attack of hiccoughing developed into nervousness and convulsions that resulted fatally to a Staten Island woman, recently.

In Aberdeen, Scotland, many persons are down on dancing, of which they speak as "close-bosomed whirlings."

An American traveling with his wife on a Norwegian steamer, recently, found that his better half could ride for half-fare, as the little folks do here.

Tiger-plush was the fabric of a traveling gown worn by a fair Russian, and in her lap was a muff of tiger-skin with the tips of tiger-tails at her throat.

An absent-minded woman put a corn-plaster on a letter, and stuck a postage-stamp on her corn. The letter turned up dead, but the corn is still alive.

A baby born during a terrible storm has been named Cyclonia. Its father says the appellation is a misnomer, for the reason that a cyclone doesn't howl every night.

According to a tourist of note, the Spanish woman is but the doll and plaything of the man, save in the lower grades of life, where she is his helpmate as a beast of burden.

Nail portraits are the latest fancy among Gallic lovers. A miniature likeness of the beloved one is photographed on the thumb-nail, so that the devoted swain may always have her image before him.

The carriage used by the Czar Alexander II on the day of his murder, has been preserved just as the bomb left it, with the rear part torn to pieces. It is a strong and constant reminder to the present Czar.

Cold veal, in some parts of Scotland where it is considered rather tasteless, is often spoken of by the name of "kiss-your-sister," from the reputed insipidity of such demonstration of family affection.

A Bridgeport, Conn., woman recently attempted suicide, on account of a neighbor's noisy children. It is a rare case to find a woman so sympathetic as this. Most women usually take pleasure in their neighbor's misfortunes.

Miss Nellie Dean, daughter of a Chicago millionaire, being stimulated by his offer to give her a dollar for every cent she could earn, entered a knitting factory at 40 cents a day, but left after one day's experience, on account of the publicity of the affair.

From 1869 to 1871 Max Hoffman was Secretary of State in Indiana. He died a few years ago of small-pox, leaving his family in destitute circumstances. His widow now supports herself and children by selling papers and keeping a fruit stand.

Little Flossy was taken into the country this summer, where she was furnished with a candlestick for her bedroom. She had never seen this form of illuminator before, and she immediately exclaimed: "Oh, mamma, see the little gas with a handle!"

A Richmond woman has some easy chairs she bought in 1838, when she was married, which today are just as good as new. Of course they are. Easy chairs don't get much wear after a girl is married. It's the year or two before the wedding that knocks the stuffing out of them.

Doctor to lady patient—"You should take something hot for your cold." Indolent patient—"Well, in what form shall I take it, doctor?" Doctor—"Considering you have so little exercise, I should say you would derive the most good from it if you took it in the shape of a flat-iron."

Flirtations in sealing-wax are the latest freak. Red is for business only; black wax is for mourning and condolence; pink for congratulations, and white for wedding invitations. Blue means love, and the color is used in various tints to mark the different stages of affection. Variegated colors are said to indicate conflicting emotions.

"Make it very strong and close, John," said a Western lady to the negro who was building a new garden-fence; "my Christianity can't stand the test of my neighbors' pigs and chickens." "I b'lieve you, missis," was the old darkey's emphatic response, "kase I bin alive notice dat dere was an end to all peace an' good-will, an' neighborliness, an' 'ligion whar dar warn't no fence."

"What would you like for dinner tonight, dear?" asked a young wife affectionately as her husband was leaving for his office. "H'm—let me see?" he mused. "How would sweetbreads do? I am very fond of them. We used often to have them at home, and they were delicious!" "That will be just lovely!" said the young wife, enthusiastically; "and I will go round to the baker's and order them myself!"

Masculinities.

Mr. Millais, the artist, is nearly seven feet tall.

Erasmus and Luther doubted the authenticity of the Apocalypse.

In Boston, the richest lawyer is Sidney Bartlett, set down as worth $12,000,000.

The Rev. Talmadge says he has always avoided a man who wears a diamond stud.

Of a man suddenly struck dumb, it may be said that his melancholy daze has come.

Count on the fidelity of the man who carries his heart in his hand, and wears his soul in his face.

Tiny white tombstones were the table decorations at the last dinner of the Thirteen Club in New York.

Mr. Jones, the roaring revivalist, demands two hundred dollars a week for serving the Lord so vociferously.

In some parts of Central Africa to say that a certain man eats salt, is equivalent to saying that he is very rich.

The Emperor William, of Germany, has a chapter of the Bible read to him immediately after dinner every day.

Samuel Miracle, an Ohio man, is the father of seventeen boys. Here is a conclusive refutation of the saying that the day of miracles is over.

Two of the smartest managers of summer hotels in Maine are women. One Maine woman cleared two thousand dollars in July and August in a seaside house.

Hugh Blaney, a Dublin wine merchant, who has just died at the age of ninety-three, was in the habit of boasting that he had worn the same coat for sixty years.

Patches were used from Charles I. to George II., but in society, not at home. Gentlemen's coats were wired so as to stick out at the time ladies wore immense hoops.

A silver medal was awarded at a calico ball given on Staten Island the other night to a young man who wore the largest necktie. The champion tie was fifty yards long.

Prof. Proctor describes how the earth will look sixty million years hence. It is very interesting, but does not compare with the burning question: "How will we look?"

Customer—"Have you some good imported cigars?" New clerk—"Not just now, but we shall have in an hour. The printer around the corner is at work on the labels now."

A Kentucky paper says: "The strongest, healthiest men stay away from the bath-tub." Perhaps so; but perhaps it is only the strongest and healthiest that can do this and live.

One Meynard, in France, has had his body cremated according to directions in his will, and cemented into a block of granite that is to become the corner-stone of a free picture gallery.

United States Treasurer Jordan has fitted up a bedroom in one of the rooms of his office and practically lives in the Treasury. A messenger also sleeps close by, so as to be within easy call when wanted.

Miss Amanda had just had a quiet tete-a-tete with Lieutenant Blighbie, and was asked by her guardian how she liked his conversation. "Oh, immensely!" she said. "There's certainly a ring in his voice."

"Good-night," he said, as he at last tore himself away and stepped out upon the porch. "Wait a minute," she said, "until I chain up the dog; it's about time for the milkman, and they are not the best of friends."

Two men seated themselves on large blocks of ice in Americus, Ga., a few days ago, on a "freeze out." One of them hunted warmer quarters after sitting it out 46 minutes, and the other contestant got "the belt."

Mr. Bennett's steam yacht Namouna has a crew, all told, of more than fifty men, and costs him about two hundred dollars a day, without making any allowance for wines and larder. She is always ready for an ocean voyage.

A New York physician, "who is taken by everybody to be ten or fifteen years younger" than he is, attributes this favorable condition to the use of lemonade, taken regularly four times a day. He has used three thousand lemons a year for ten years.

The "sandwich men" of New York mess and bunk together in one dirty cellar. The monopolist of this class of street advertising gives them their board, $2 a month, and two drinks of whisky, with an allowance of tobacco every day. Their beds are straw mattresses laid on the floor; they have no bedclothes. Their day's labor ceases at 11 o'clock at night.

"I think I'm the unluckiest man in town!" said a husband to his wife. "Smith has owed me $20 for three months, and he promised to pay me to-day." "Didn't he pay?" she asked, anxiously. "Yes, he paid; but while he was in the act of giving me the money, Brown came in—you know I've owed Brown $20 for more than a year—and, of course, I had to turn the money over to him. That's what I call hard luck."

A negro in Jackson county, Ga., was helping his employer to catch an unruly two-year-old steer, when the employer called to him to look out, or the steer would butt him. The negro answered that he could out-butt the steer, whereupon the white man said: "Do so, and you can have the carcass!" To his horror, the negro made a run toward the steer, the two came together head to head, and the quadruped fell in its tracks, dead.

An old country gentleman, returning home rather late, discovered a young man with a lantern under his kitchen window, who, when asked his business there, stated he had only come a-courting. "Come a-what?" said the irate gentleman. "A-courting, sir—I'm courting Mary." "It's a falsehood!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "What do you want a lantern for? I never used one in my courting days." "No," was the young man's reply, "I don't think you did, judging by the old lady."

OF CENTENARIANS.

IN these days, a man is looked upon as a kind of miracle who has existed for a hundred years ere he 'shuffled off this mortal coil.'

But what would be thought of that individual who was not called upon to do so until the record of his years showed the unparalleled number of two hundred and seven?

Yet such a life is said to have existed in the person of Thomas Cran, who we are told, died at the age of two hundred and seven, at St Leonard's, Shoreditch, London in the year 1588.

The evidence of this case of longevity is said to be confirmed by the register of the parish of St. Leonard's the date of Cran's death being given as having occurred on the 28th of January of that year.

The nearest approach to Cran's case is that published in what was then called the *Russian Petersburg Gazette*, in the early part of 1812, where and when it was stated, but merely stated, that a man had died in the diocese or province of Ekaterinoslav, between two hundred and two hundred and five years of age!

From the very long list of reputed centenarians we extract a number of the more interesting and notable, none of whom, however—if the recorded dates are to be relied on—are younger than six-score years and ten; the number of cases of those whose ages range from one hundred and thirty down being very numerous.

First of all there is the well-known case of Thomas Parr, or 'Old' Parr as he is sometimes called. He actually lived to be one hundred and fifty-two. The death of Old Parr occurred in 1635, the same year, it is curious to note, in which another 'Parr' was born and destined, like his better-known namesake, to be celebrated as a centenarian. This latter person—probably a relative of Old Parr—whose grandson, John Michaelstone, lived till he was one hundred and twenty-seven—attained the age of one hundred and twenty-four, thus falling short of Thomas Parr by twenty-eight years.

Standing only fourteenth on the list in point of age, Old Parr is the junior of the thirteen persons who are before him by periods varying from seven to fifty-five years, this latter number being the difference in age between himself and Thomas Cran. Excluding the two-hundred year old Russian, we have on record the following worthy descendants of Methuselah: Peter Torbin, died at Temeswar Hungary, in 1724, aged one hundred and eighty five; a mulatto man, at Fredericktown, Virginia, in 1708, one hundred and eighty; Colour M'Grain, at Isle of Jura, in 1805, one hundred and eighty; Louisa Truxo, a negress, at Tucuman, South America, 1780, one hundred and seventy-two; Henry Jenkins, Yorkshire, in 1670, one hundred and sixty-nine; William Edwards, at Cochen, near Cardiff, in 1668, one hundred and sixty-eight; a woman living at Moscow, in 1848, one hundred and six-eight; Jonas Warren, at Ballydoyle, Ireland in 1787, one hundred and sixty-seven; Sarah Brookman, at Glastonbury, one hundred and sixty-six; Judith Scott, at Islington, in 1800, one hundred and sixty-two; Jonas Surington, at Bergen, Norway, in 1797, one hundred and fifty-nine; James Bowles, at Killingworth, Warwickshire, in 1656, one hundred and fifty-nine. Afterwards there follows a long list of persons of various nationalities, whose ages range from one hundred and fifty-nine down to one hundred and thirty. In all, there are two hundred and ten; and of these, thirty-one are given as having been one hundred and thirty years old.

We may next mention a number of miscellaneous worthies who are credited with having cheated Death of his due for so long. Marc Abuna, an Ethiopian, lived a century and a half; a colored man died in 1850 at Spanish Town, Jamaica, in his one hundred and forty-second year; C. J. Drakenberg, a Norwegian, lived forty-one years, as also did William Evans, a Welshman; William Gulstone, an Irishman, died at the age of one hundred and forty; William Shapley, another Irishman, at one hundred and thirty-eight: William Beale, also a native of Ireland, at one hundred and thirty-six, and thirteen more of the sons of St. Patrick from that age down.

It is remarable that in the list of two hundred and ten persons who attained the age, and beyond it, of one hudred and twenty, thirty-one were Irish, and mostly belonged to the poor or peasant class.

The Countess Desmond was said to be one hundred and forty-eight when she died; while her co-aristocrat, the Countess of Eccleston, is credited with having lived one hundred and forty-three years.

Not so old as the former lady was an humbler native of Ireland Biddy or Bridget Devine, who died at Manchester in 1845, aged one hundred and forty-seven, where, probably a hundred years before, she had toiled as a washerwoman.

But perhaps the most pathetic case of feminine longevity in this list, if not on record anywhere, is that of a poor woman, a Mrs. Grey, of Northfleet, Kent, who was born deaf and dumb and died without ever, during one hundred and thirty one years, being able to hear or speak a word. Nor were uninteresting cases those of 'Martha' wife of a Mohican chief, who died in 1806, aged one hundred and thirty; of a certain Rebecca Fury, a black woman at Falmouth, Jamaica, aged one hundred and forty; and of Sarah Anderson, free black, who survived for forty years after receiving her freedom on her hundredth birthday. But the oldest woman on record was also a negress, Louisa Truxo, a native of Tucuman, South America, where she died in 1780, at the reputed age of one hundred and seventy five.

Our list is by no means exhausted; but the examples we have given are perhaps sufficient to interest the reader. It is not to be supposed that the race of centenarians has become anything like an extinct genus. We frequently read of genuine cases occurring, most of them being poor persons, or persons living in the humblest walks of life. And with increased sanitary blessings, there is no reason why those cases should not multiply.

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"For Lilias," is the seventh issue of Lippincott's Select Series of 25 cent novels. It is by Rosa N. Carey, and turns mainly on the history of a woman who in the flush of youth, grew restless in the common paths of life, and struck out for herself with the result of learning her folly. It is good reading and contains a good moral.

With a great many readers Scott is a favorite author and therefore the Rev. W. J. Rolfe's new critical edition of "Marmion" will be hailed with pleasure. This is claimed to be the only *accurate* edition of the poem ever issued in America. It is elegantly printed, and every allusion, however faint, that is likely to be obscure to the general reader is made most plain by copious and judicious notes. In addition to these commendable features it is illustrated with numerous beautiful engravings of various places referred to in the poem. In flexible covers. Price 75 cents. Published by Ticknor, Boston; and for sale by Lippincott, this city.

"The Will," a novel, by Ernest Eckstein, author of Quintus Claudius, and other able fictions, has been published by W. S. Gottsberger, in a translation from the German by Clara Bell. It is a story of life, social and otherwise, in the Germany of yesterday, and is strong in plot and uncommonly artistic in treatment, the idea of the will upon which the plot turns approaching originality, supposing such a thing possible. The characters are sketched with rare force, and in several instances with masterly power. It is more full of the humorous element than we are accustomed to in German fiction, and it may be added that the humor is bright, genial and natural. The work is one that may be cordially commended to the notice of all who admire a powerful fiction admirably told. For sale by Porter & Coates.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

Our Little Ones and the Nursery for October is full of good reading and pretty pictures for the youngest readers. In size of type and simplicity of matter everything is best adapted for their pleasure and understanding. Russell Publishing Co., Boston.

Cassell's Family Magazine for October presents a pleasing variety of subjects. A Diamond in the Rough, continues to grow more interesting as the plot develops. A lady cyclist contributes a well-written and sensible article entitled, Women on Wheels. Tricycling seems to have grown very popular with English women of late. Other contents of this number include: When Grandfather was Young; Mrs. John Allen, of Ridge View, by Catherine Owen; Some Hints on Economy in Dress; A New Order of Odd Fellows, an amusing sketch; An Old Dutch City; an account of the, Friends in the Commons, or, as we should say, Quakers in Parliament, shows us what an important part this sect has played in the political history of England. Cassell & Co., Publishers, New York.

The Magazine of Art for October is an exceptionally good number. The frontispiece is an excellent wood-cut from the painting of Frank Dicksee, A. R. A., entitled, Chivalry. A discriminating article on the work of Arnold Boecklin, by Claude Phillips, with portrait and three illustrations, tells the story of this distinguished German artist. Granada, by David Hannay is superbly illustrated. Among other subjects treated and illustrated are: Celtic Metal Work; Current Art, with four illustrations; Burmantoft's Faience, by Cosmo Monkhouse, with six engravings; Female Head-gear, (early eighteenth century), by Richard Heath, with ten illustrations; The Market at Fez, from the picture of Ricardo Madroso; The Chronicle of Art; A Note on Mabuse, by W. Martin Conway, and American Art Notes. Cassell & Co., Publishers, New York.

TRIALS OF ANIMALS.

THE most singular freak in judicial history perhaps were the trial of animals, which at one time was much in vogue, and quadrupeds were brought before courts and arraigned in the same manner as human being.

Fancy a renowned lawyer in our day making a name by defending some rats who had feloniously feasted on the barley belonging to a monastery! Or a mediæval court, in all its splendor and paraphernalia, gravely trying a pig for murder!

Such scenes were quite frequently enacted in the Middle Ages, and are a curious commentary on the quips and cranks that take possession of the human mind, and have their day on the stage of human events.

The lawyer alluded to was one Bartholomew Chassenee, who made himself very famous in trials of animals in the fifteenth century.

He was counsel for the rats before the Ecclesiastical Council of Autun, in France, and made a very ingenious defence for his clients, showing they were too scattered in their residences to be all summoned, and had the right of appeal; also that, as their lives would be in danger from cats and other enemies, they were at liberty to refuse to appear, under the plea of self-preservation.

The sentence in this singular trial is not recorded, though the whole of Chassenee's ingenious defence was published.

In the records of the same court is some very clever reasoning by the same lawyer on the subject of the excommunication of troublesome insects called huberes, who destroyed the grain of the Autun farmers.

It was very common once to hurl the ban of excommunication at animals, and even at inanimate things.

Sparrows, toads, and mice fell under the interdict of the Church. The Bishop of Triers excommunicated the sparrows because they invaded the church at all hours, and soiled the building and the vestments of the clergy in their unlawful and impertinent intrusion.

They were ordered a trial, but, owing to their great number and irrepressible manners, this was deemed the easiest way to dispose of them. Unfortunately, history saith not if it had the desired result.

The Bishop of Lausanne was believed to have freed Lake Leman from eels, which at one time infested its waters.

Perhaps he followed the example of St. Patrick, whose success in the extirpation of toads from Erin preceded those of the good bishop.

St. Bernard excommunicated the flies, which infested the country in swarms. Lo! next morning they lay dead upon the ground, like the Egyptian first-born; unbelievers declared it was a sudden frost caused the mortality, but the orthodox blessed the saint for the miracle he had wrought.

In the Tyrol, in 1519, there was a very curious trial of moles, who were said to injure the ground by their burrowing. Hans Grusbrnen took charge of the defence, and Schwarze Minig was prosecutor. There were a host of witnesses. It was proved that the crops were injured, and the moles were sentenced to depart; the counsel demanded safe conduct for them, which the judge granted for the space of fourteen days.

Court records were very irregularly kept in those days; but there are cases extant of animals being tried, sentenced to death, and even submitted to the rack or to mutilation.

At Oppenheim on the Rhine, in 1426, two pigs were publicly buried alive for killing a child. They underwent a full trial beforehand.

A donkey was sentenced to be hanged, but an appeal was made, and he was knocked on the head instead. In 1266 a pig was publicly burned at the stake for the murder of a child.

An odd case of carrying out the *lex talionis* occurred at Falaise, in France. A sow was tried for infanticide, found guilty and condemned to be hung in men's clothes, purchased at the expense of the State, and the hangman was provided with a pair of new gloves for the occasion.

In the execution of beasts, the public executioner was always employed, not the butcher, as might be thought. They also confined the culprit at the jail with human beings.

A parallel might be drawn occasionally in which the genus *homo* might not be altogether flattered; but we refrain, and return to our subject.

At Montpelier, in 1565, a mule was tried and burnt alive; but the record of the crime of this usually patient and industrious, if somewhat opinionated, animal is buried in oblivion.

In the province of Gisons was found the order for payment for a scaffold erected for the execution of an ox "for its demerits." A horse was also hung at Dijon for killing a boy of twelve years.

The town of Basle, in 1490, was greatly agitated over the heinous crime of a cock who laid an egg! He was sentenced to have his comb and claws cut off, and to be beheaded.

For a long time cocks' eggs were considered very unlucky; witches sought after them, and they were believed to hatch cockatrices or venomous serpents.

STRIKING manners are bad manners.

OH! ye who teach the ingenious youth of our great and growing nation, let them learn the noble act of self-defense, as Salvation Oil is *the* specific for hurts.

Humorous.

CANNING PRESERVES.

Oh, happy chance! to-day I strolled
Into the garden's fair domain,
And at a window did behold
A sight to charm a sighing swain—
The lovely Maud, with white arms bare—
Such dimples and bewitching curves!
Was busy with a mixture rare;
In short, I poached on Maud's preserves.

She mutbled me with a pretty frown,
But ceased not from her toothsome task,
Although I called the muses down
Before her charming smile to bask.
I praised her color and her hair,
Her dainty dress, her arm, her waist;
She murmured, with an absent air:
"Too much of sugar spoils the taste."

At this I veered and threw her chaff,
That worthless aftermath of wit,
Yet strove in vain to draw a laugh,
No ripple o'er her face would flit.
I blated at the Borgia's art,
She gave her sunny head a toss,
And cried, in tones that sounded tart:
"I don't want any of your sauce!"

I changed my tactics just once more,
And, in a trembling voice and low,
I whispered of the love I bore,
I saw her color come and go;
And when I said: "Can't you say yes?"
She loudly clattered glass and pan,
And yet I think—at least, I guess—
She murmured softly: "Yes, I can!"

W. R. R.

Hard to beat—Carpets.

Bright beginning—Sunrise.

A vane bird—The weather-cock.

A chest-protector—Lock and key.

A calico wrapper—The dry-goods clerk.

A bit of real life—A piece of boarding-house cheese.

Curious transformation—A horse being turned into a pasture.

Why is the letter x like a person in debt? Because it is always in perplexity.

When is a serial story like money deposited in a bank? When it grows in interest.

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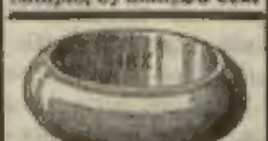
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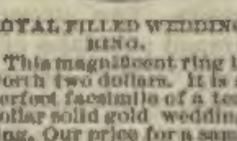
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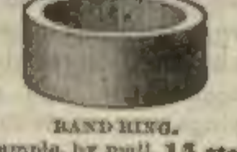
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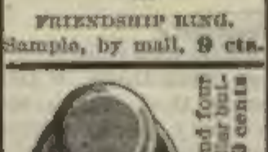
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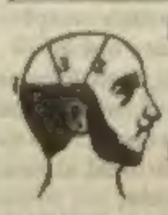

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Latest Fashion Phases.

Any further exaggeration in the height of chapeaux, or of their trimmings, as at present arranged in front of the crown, being apparently impossible, many modistes in search of novelty now place the garnitures on the top of a moderately high crown, or put them at the back, where they attain to a great height and fall over the top of the crown towards the front.

Nearly all the hats at present are made of straw, the most fashionable being those of yellow straw veiled with yellow tulle to match, and trimmed with a quantity of bows of moire ribbon, rising at the back of the hat to the crown, with a few loops falling over in front.

A similar model in bronze straw, but with a very high and narrow crown, has a scarf of beige crape or silk muslin folded round the crown, and ending at the back under a long plume of feathers, the tips of which quite conceal the flat top of the crown, and fall over it a little in front. In these hats the brim in front is wide and straight, but very short at the back and turned up a little.

Light-colored straws are those generally preferred, either in the natural color, or in light beige, ivory, a red shade of beige, and similar colors. The brim at the back is frequently turned up, like a curtain, and lined with bronze, brown, or black velvet; the lining of the front part of the brim matches this, but the trimming of faille, crepe, gauze, etc., is in the same color as the straw, and often arranged in bows or loops far back on the top of the crown. Roses and other flowers are placed in the same position.

Many of the hats are very large, but more reasonable shapes are beginning to make their appearance, and as the immensely high or large hats are only becoming to a few types of face, the smaller models will be quickly appreciated and adopted.

The early part of the autumn is always a busy time with amateur dressmakers; costumes made in the spring often need a little renovation before they can be adopted for general autumn wear, and it is still too early to think of winter's modes. The ways in which dresses may be remodelled are now so numerous, and so easy, that it seems scarcely worth while to point them out.

The present fashion of combining different materials and colors in one costume makes the task of renovation much simpler than when such combinations are not allowed; the positions of plain and figured fabrics may also be reversed at will, and, indeed, the rules that may not be transgressed are so few and so simple, that economical alterations are more than ever possible.

There are two combinations of material that are not allowed—woollen fabrics must not be draped on cotton, nor cotton materials on wool, but silk may be combined with any material, and so also may velvet.

Two different figured materials, again, cannot be united in one dress, unless one of them is embroidery, corresponding in style and color with the design of the figured material. Beyond this everything is allowed; a skirt may be converted into a tunic, or a drapery into a corsage, and short remnants of good materials will be long enough to supply a waistcoat, a plastron, a robing for the front of a skirt, or a panel for the side.

The chief point is to choose a model for the new dress, which can be carried out with the materials at command, and then to combine these fabrics with a due regard to their colors and textures. Dresses with plain skirts and short-waisted bodices are the only ones made of a single material, but even in these the trimmings, usually of velvet may be in a different color, contrasting with the dress material.

Pleated skirts are still very much worn, accompanied by a pointed bodice with small basques. Bodices that are worn in front can be opened over plastrons of all shapes, and of plain, striped, brocbe, or embroidered fabrics. The collar matches the plastron, and the paraments are also made of the same material.

Very narrow skirts can be widened by opening them in front and letting in a tablier, pointed at the top and wide at the edge, made of some different material; if this material is plain the tablier is pleated; if figured a plain flat tablier is better. Panels on one side of a skirt answer the same purpose, and, if the skirt or tunic is short as well as narrow, a band of the same material as the panel or tablier may be carried round the edge of the skirt. This band, simulating an underskirt, should not, however, be more than four inches deep.

Draperies may be altered in innumerable ways, and for these all kinds of combination of materials are permissible. Plain material is mixed with striped, brocbe, embroidered, or chequered fabrics; light and transparent materials are made up on thicker ones; light and dark fabrics, in silk or wool, or in silk and wool, are made up together; revers, and turned back portions of tunics are lined with a different color and material; scarfs; sashes, tabliers, and panels all these give the means of providing plenty of change.

Corsages are ornamented indifferently with waistcoats, revers, yokes, large collars or plastrons front and back, ending in long points on the basque, and either plain, pleated, or gathered. Bodices with corselets, short open jackets, and long Louis XI. casaques, are all worn; in fact, with the multiplicity of modes now in vogue, every costume is susceptible not of one alteration only, but of a great number.

The skill of the tailor is more and more appealed to for the costumes that are to follow the light toilettes of batiste and lace, rendered necessary by an almost tropical heat. There is an undeniable charm about these simple, correct, austere-looking costumes, which are elegant in spite of their austerity, that will ensure a long continuance of favor to these productions of skilled tailors.

The skirts of tailor-made costumes are round and full, and mounted on silk foundation skirts. The tunic is an unpretending draped tablier, completed at the back by a pleated breadth, raised a trifle on one side, or on both sides, but very full at the waist and nearly covering the back of the skirt. As to the bodice, it moulds the bust with the most perfect accuracy; not a fold, not the shadow of a crease is to be found in its faultless fit, resembling that of a habit bodice. It is sometimes fastened straight down the front with little round buttons put on close together, in other cases it opens over a waistcoat of white pique, or a pleated chemisette, made of white or colored crepe, or else of silk in a color that offers an agreeable contrast to the dress material.

It is mainly by the correct lines and perfect fit of her tailor-made costume that an elegante may be recognised; it has neither ornaments nor useless details to deceive the eye, everything in the dress denotes the profection of cut and make that only the very best tailors understand. This quiet, unpretentious accuracy is evidently the cause of the immense success that follows tailor-made costumes, for ladies are delighted at having found a style of dress which cannot be copied by everyone.

A new costume, the *Papalin*, ranks with tailor-made dresses for general utility, and as a very practical model made in dark hued woollen fabrics, mohair, and similar materials. The skirt is pleated in wide pleats, and falls straight from the waist. The short-waisted corsage joins the skirt under a waistband of ottoman or moire ribbon tied in a large bow, with long ends at the back. The dress is completed by a *Papalin* mantelet in the same material as the dress, cut like a short pelerine, with pointed hood falling from the shoulders.

Both the mantelet and the hood are lined with silk, but the costume has no other ornaments or trimmings to detract from its absolute simplicity of style.

Canvas and network fabrics will be worn throughout the autumn in combination with faille Francaise, faille Chinoise, and other plain silken materials, and, although the majority of dresses are in two colors, many, and these not the least ladylike and stylish, are in one color only.

A charming toilette in dove-gray etamine has a plain skirt of etamine pekin, with horizontal stripes more closely woven, and thickly embroidered with fine, cut-steel beads. The upper part of the dress is a draped polonaise of plain, etamine with a deep corselet bodice of dove-grey velvet, ornamented round all its edges with large steel beads cut in facets. The high velvet collar and the velvet paraments are also bordered with bead. The gray straw hat worn with this dress is trimmed and lined with grey velvet, the brim is bordered with steel beads, and a dove with outspread wings ornaments the front.

Domestic Economy.

A woman of individuality and refinement always impresses her surroundings with a stamp as characteristic as that which she imparts, often unconsciously, to her dress. It is this quality in an interior which distinguishes some households from a hundred others, to the casual observer identically the same in every particular.

It is a quality perhaps never to be acquired in toto, if not to an extent inborn, but it is to a degree susceptible of cultivation, even when there is little natural foundation to start on.

There has been of late a reaction in the matter of furnishing and decorating. After the Centennial the taste for these things sprang up with an impetus that quickly degenerated into exaggeration. People went wild on the subject and stocked their houses with a jumble of what was generally and vaguely held to be "æsthetic," with an indefinite idea that the more odd chairs, the more tawdry plush, the more embroidered screens and supposed-to-be "art needlework," the more rugs and Japanese panels and fans, the more painted plaques they crowded into their rooms, the more artistic, correct and generally satisfactory the result would be.

As every one could not by any means afford to have every square inch of available space on walls and floor covered by truely valuable and beautiful things, and as every such inch had, under the influence of this benighting fever, to be thus covered whether or not, cheap decorative effects reached a pitch where they became a nightmare.

Then there came the retrograde movement, and under its influence people are beginning to learn that a truly artistic home is not an over-crowded one, and that it is best to have few intrinsically beautiful, or at least pleasing and harmonious things, and not hundreds of tawdry and specious ones, for the latter have invariably the effect of detracting from the beautiful effects and of vulgarizing them; so that they might just as well not be there at all as in such company.

In the matter of art needle work, for instance, the question of plush scarfs, of raw silk embroidered tidies, of worked portieres of all those thousand details, has been entirely overdone. Three-fourths of that style of erroneously called decoration which meets one at every turn, are cheap, poorly executed, fatiguing attempts, which end by becoming a weariness to the flesh, and prove a sinful waste of time on the part of the perpetrators.

A really beautiful piece of needlework ranks among true works of art, and is a joy to the eye forever. Let women who have the leisure for that sort of thing give their energies and talent toward the attainment of some such standard, and not fritter them away on trivial and commonplace bits and scraps of fancy work which cost money and are out of fashion within a couple of months.

There was exhibited recently a piece of work which took the prize at the New Orleans Exhibiton for objects of that kind. They were window hangings, of white batiste over linings of pale golden surah. Down the sides and across the bottom were inserted bands of lace-like guipure, with squares of it in blocks at the intersecting corners, and dropped, as it were, at square and regular intervals over the hanging; and against each cluster of these blocks were trumpet-flowers worked in red orange tints of the natural vine.

Across the top hung a deep lambrequin of the surah with a wide branch of that graceful Southern flower standing up against the pale ground. Tiny floss tassels, of yellow, red and orange, depended from the lambrequin, and were studded along the sides and at the bottom against the transparent meshes of the guipure. Now that was what might in truth be called "art" needlework.

One piece of work in any way approximating to such a standard possesses more value as a decorative note in a room than two dozen inferior mats, tidies, scarfs, and all the rest of it. A decorative artist who has a deserved reputation, recently has given much of his time to painting full length figures on satin for portieres.

A halberdier, in corselet and casque, against a tawny background, has a most happy effect. He seems, across the room, to be a living form guarding the door. A portiere of this description is lined with heavy plush in a dull golden shade and has a band of this at top and bottom. This artist has also some leather screens, in a mounting of dark carved wood, with a landscape painted on each of the three leaves of the screen, each landscape different and framed in a sort of medallion of branches in leaf. The back is of plain stamped leather.

A black plushed screen framed heavily in ebony is painted on each leaf with an exquisite sombre design of water lilies and aquatic grasses, the background, indicated by a few strong touches, giving a perspective of mysterious woodland, with dim rays of light piercing through and illumining some sleeping water. For a drawing-room furnished in light tints we recently had shown to us a screen of white wood, gilded with the panels of pale blue satin painted with roses and Cupids.

The bay window of this same room was to be curtained with close-drawn white batiste, thin as a cobweb and strewn with half blown rosebuds, each blossom of puffed and gathered pale pink surah in relief, and the small stem and leaves embroidered in delicate greens. The curtains were to be held back by bows of pink and the lightest green.

Here again was some really beautiful work done by deft and experienced feminine fingers. This same design appeared also on a baby's blanket of white flannel, and the rosebuds had there a most appropriate effect. There was a second baby's blanket, also of white cloth which had wild roses embroidered upon it, each rose singly and some with the petals falling apart and scattered at random, as though they had just dropped, blown over the cloth by the wind. A white cord supplied the necessary finish for the edge.

The newest doylies—which doylies women clever with their pencil have been recently ornamenting with spirited pen and ink drawings—are now worked with silver or gilt thread in the daintiest and finest little flower designs.

A young woman died in New York on Monday from the effects of an injury she received three months ago by having a ball batted against her spine by boys who were playing ball in the streets.

Confidential Correspondents.

T. S.—It was.

PHILA.—It is your good nature alone that credited us with omniscience. In your inquiry about Hydrangeas, we must refer you to some practical florist.

J. K. L.—We do not know that anybody was ever foolish enough to offer a reward for the discovery of "perpetual motion." We do know, however, that nobody has ever yet discovered that "fool's phenomenon."

SUNDAY.—Providence, who hallowed the Sabbath, never intended that it should be a day of penance and gloom, but of rest; and rest, in this sense, means a harmless diversion of the thoughts from the anxieties of business, and that healthful recreation which revives the energies to meet another six days of labor.

J. B. G.—A gentleman who has engaged himself to a lady cannot very well break off the affair; but if he finds he does not love her so much as at first, or that there are other circumstances which threaten the happiness of such a marriage, he should explain himself very candidly to her on the point, and ask her to release him from his engagement.

EVELYN.—The organ of destructiveness, phrenologists, assert, is situated just above the ear; it gives a fulness to the head over the upper part of the ear, frequently causing it to project. It gives fierceness, passion, and energy to man; without it man sinks before worldly difficulties. When exceedingly prominent, it is said to denote harsh and murderous propensities.

BARON.—If a man loves a woman, he should not stop to ferret out her age, as she will seem young to him as long as he loves her. If, however, he learn the fact that she is his senior, and if he be annoyed thereby, he should not marry her, as such an annoyance would after a while corrode his domestic relations and be the cause of much dissatisfaction, and finally of unhappiness, and perhaps of separation.

DENE.—The "h" in hospital, humble, and hostelry should be sounded, while in honesty and honor it is silent. It is usually silent also, though not invariably, in hotel, humor, and humorous. As to the use of "a" or "an," you will find this a useful rule:—When the accent of a word commencing with the aspirate falls on other than the first syllable, use "an"; when on the first syllable use "a." Thus we say "a history," but "an historian."

WILLIAMSON.—Candidly, we think that all your parents' objections are well-grounded—especially that which applies to the "occasional intemperance" of your suitor. Do not deceive yourself: a lover who would so far forget himself as to drink too much in the presence of one whom he styles the object of his affections, will not scruple to gratify his propensity to liquor when the marriage knot is tied. Your parents are not "too particular;" they are only properly prudent.

WASH.—You can, of course, speak to the lady whom you "so often meet, and who looks as if she would like to speak to you," but you would certainly be violating the rules of good breeding by so doing. The only honorable way to form an acquaintance is by means of an introduction, as we have so often pointed out. We know that people do speak to each other in the way you mention, but as you are anxious to know if it is really correct, we are emphatic in saying "no."

READER.—The celebrated leaning tower of Pisa was commenced in the second half of the twelfth century. A plumb-line suspended from the summit hangs out about 12 ft. from the base, showing how far the tower leans off the perpendicular. The strange inclination is probably attributable to the unequal sinking of the structure, consequent upon some peculiarity in the foundation. The singularity, it appears, showed itself as soon as the building was above ground; but the architects determined to proceed with their work, and the tower still remains standing. Two towers at Bologna show a similar departure form the vertical.

L. YOUNG.—According to Herschel, if there be inhabitants in the moon, the earth must present to them the extraordinary appearance of a moon of nearly two degrees in diameter, exhibiting the same phases as we see the moon to do, but immovably fixed in their sky (or, at least, changing its apparent place only by the small amount of the libration), while the stars must seem to pass slowly beside and behind it. It will appear clouded with invariable spots, and belted with equatorial and tropical zones corresponding to our trade winds; and it may be doubted whether, in their perpetual change, the outlines of our continents and seas can ever be clearly discerned.

P. W.—The French spoliation claims, proper, grew out of the capture, by French privateers, of 1201 American vessels. The time was during the last two years of the Eighteenth Century and the first half of the first year of the present century. A treaty was made between the United States and France in 1800 to settle all this trouble. It was ratified by both parties in 1801, the First Consul of France signing July 31, 1801. This treaty abrogated the mutuality of obligation found in the treaty of 1778, and provided for a settlement of the American claims against France on account of the marine seizures. France had public claims against this country, which we allowed by permitting the extinguishment of our citizens' private claims against France. The United States thus became responsible to its own citizens. After eighty-four years it has recognised the debt by legislating for payment.

BEATRICE.—The mark (!) or (?) enclosed in brackets after a sentence is supposed to cast doubt upon the sentence it follows. In the case you give "and myself, also a friend of mine (?)" it means that you are somewhat doubtful of being a friend to yourself. 2. He cannot help what his father is. If you love each other and he is all you say, your parents' disinclination may wear off in time. They are older than you, however, and wiser in the world's ways. Parents as a rule care more for their children than anyone else can, so listen to, and think over what they say carefully. Under the circumstances we see nothing wrong in the gift of the locket. You are not too young for company. 3. Grace Darling was a brave English girl who many years ago rescued unaided, in a violent storm, a number of people from a ship-wrecked vessel on the coast of England. We think she is still living. 4. Your handwriting is as good as handwriting need be; clear and easily read. No points of beauty are better than these in writing.